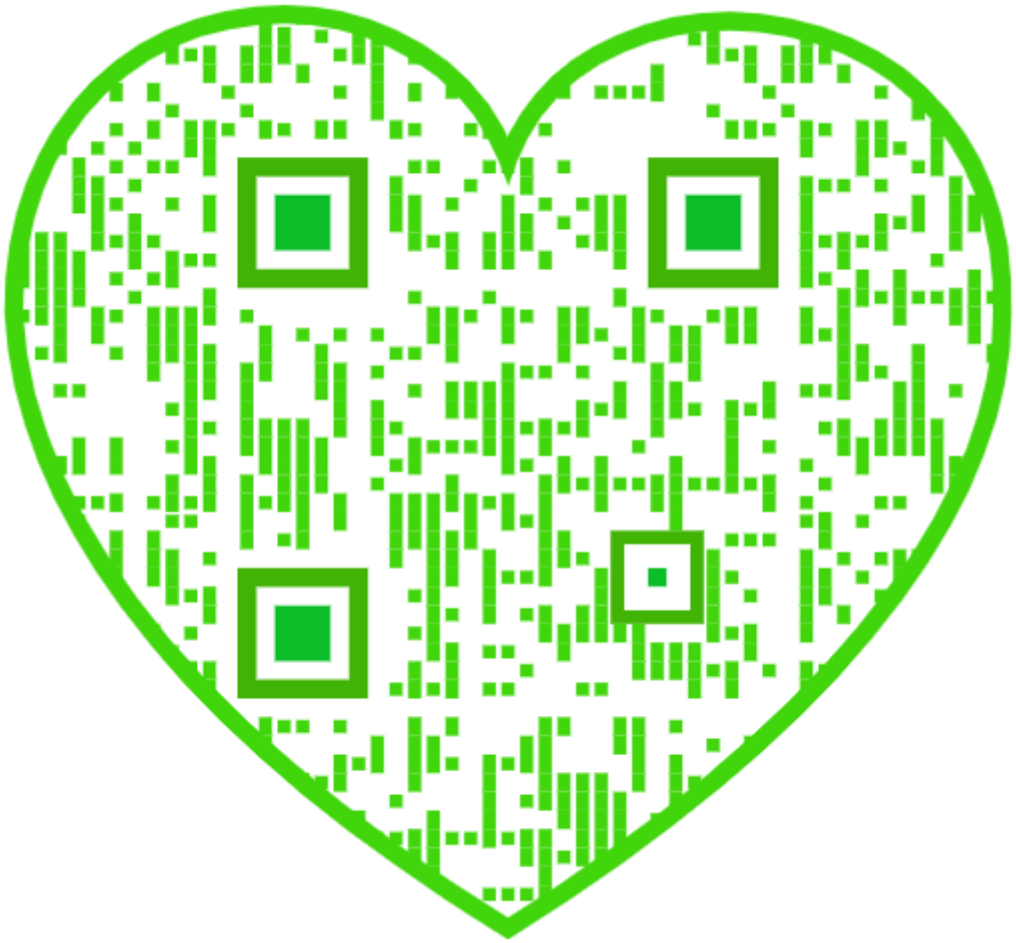

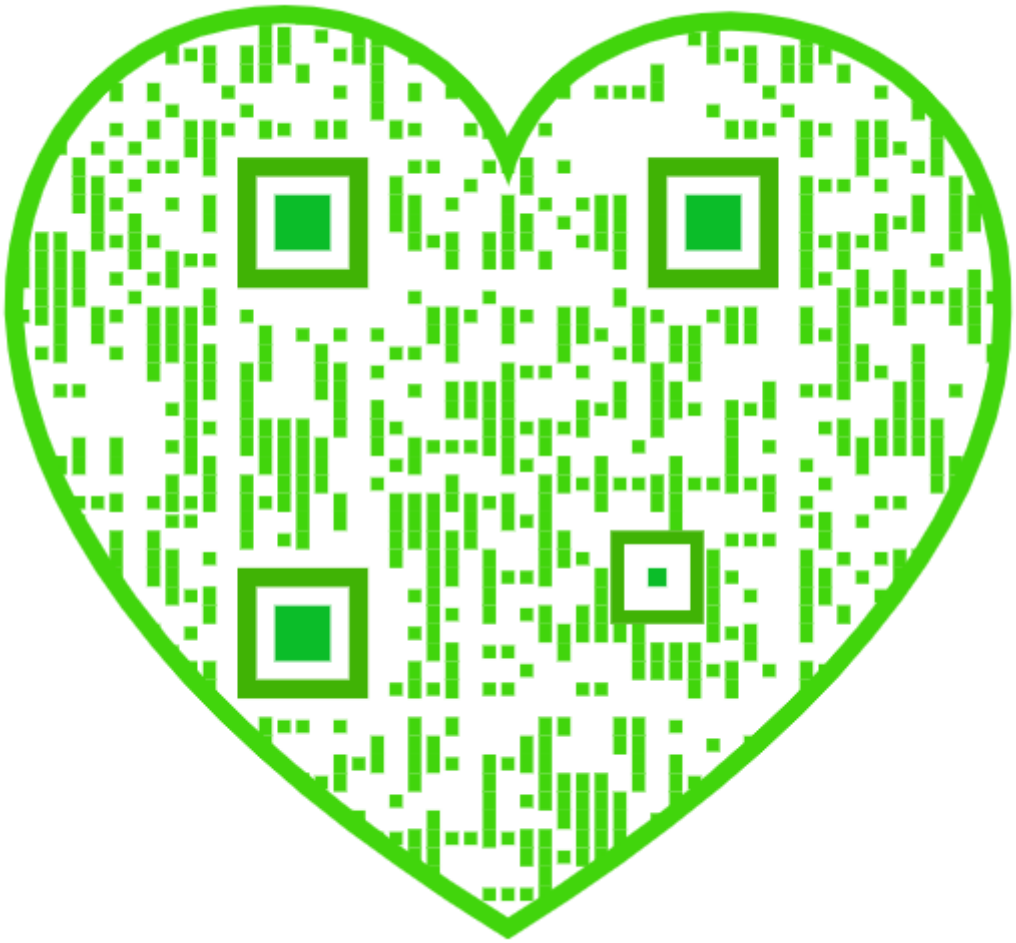

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THE

YOUNG MAN'S GUIDE

TO

TRUE GREATNESS.

BY

REV. J. W. KASEY.

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INTRODUCTION.

In presenting the following lectures to the public, we are well apprised of the fact, that very few writers possess the ability to please all who may read their writings. Objections are often urged against the writings of those whose works have accomplished a vast amount of good. While one objects to the language used by a certain author, and another to his style, others seem to admire both the language and style of the same author. Hence, while the writings of some of the most popular and distinguished writers of the age are greatly admired by some, they are severely criticised and censured by others. And, as we have but little experience as a writer, it may be expected that some things have escaped our notice, in the following work, which should be corrected.

Our object has been, however, not so much to please the fancy, or to baffle the skill of the critic, as to instruct the young, who have but little experience of the ways of the world, and to direct their attention to those moral principles and sentiments which may, in future, induce them to shun the ways of vice, and pursue the paths of virtue and happiness.

When we look over this country, and see hun-

dreds and thousands of young men, some of whom are just engaging in the busy scenes of life, and others just coming to the years of maturity, well may we ask, "What will they accomplish in the after-time of their lives? Will they take rank with the benefactors, or with the scourgers of their race?" Will they be governed by the moral and religious sentiments so prevalent in some portions of this country; or will they be governed by false sentiments and improper influences, and thus become a curse to all with whom they associate, and finally plunge into eternal ruin? How important the inquiry!

It is very natural for those who feel concerned about this matter, to inquire, who shall instruct and guide the youths of this country? Who shall point out to them the path of safety, and guard them against all the snares and besetments to which they are exposed? Who, by their example and influence, shall lead them in the way which will be most conducive to their happiness and usefulness?

It would seem at first thought, that there could be but one correct answer to these important questions; for it will readily be admitted by all, that it is the duty of parents and guardians to instruct and train the youths committed to their care. But, if the former fail to do their duty in this respect, shall the latter be neglected? Shall they roam through the world without some kind hand to lead them, or some friendly voice to coun-

sel them when danger is near? Or will those who feel interested in their future welfare, carefully watch their steps, and shield them from those influences so well calculated to give a wrong bias to their minds, and lead them to destruction?

At no period, perhaps, in the history of this country, have parents been so perfectly indifferent as to the physical, moral, and intellectual training of their children, as at the present. As a general thing, parents, in this respect, seem not to realize their responsibility. A few seem to feel that it is right to "train up their children in the way they should go," and are disposed to act accordingly. But a large majority of them seem to be going upon the principle, that they are in no way responsible for the future welfare of those committed to their charge. Hence they are living in the neglect of a very important duty.

Hundreds and thousands of parents may be found in our midst, who seem to be as indifferent about the future destiny of their children, as if there was no relationship existing between them at all. A great many of them manifest infinitely more concern for their horses and mules, and especially for their servants, than they do for their children. This, we know, is a hard saying, and it is with shame that we make such a declaration; but it is true, notwithstanding.

We have seen parents accompany their children to the bar of civil justice, and look on while the just penalty of the law was inflicted upon

them, without manifesting the slightest emotion. And worse than this, seemed inclined to justify and uphold them in the commission of crime, when there was positive evidence of their guilt. Now, when such things are common among parents, how, we ask, can it be expected that their children will pursue the path of virtue and morality?

But, then, if parents knew, and were disposed, in all respects, to do their duty toward their offspring, many of them are called away from the shores of mortality long before their children come to the years of maturity or accountability—long before they are prepared to act for themselves in any capacity whatever. The consequence, in many instances is, that although their physical wants may be well attended to, in a moral and intellectual point of view they are almost entirely neglected. As thousands of youths, then, are left unprotected and uncared for, in a world where there is so much to lead them astray, we ask again, who shall influence them to "be followers of that which is good?" Will not every genuine patriot, every sincere philanthropist, in view of the welfare of his country, if from no higher consideration, lend a helping hand?

The facilities for acquiring scientific knowledge, and for gaining information in regard to the various business pursuits, are so numerous at the present day, that young men are qualified for almost any kind of business, long before the moral

principles, by which they should be governed, are well established in their minds. The result is, they are sent out into the world to transact business, when they are wholly unprepared to resist those influences which poison the minds of so many at an early age, and bring upon them swift destruction. And among the first things we hear of them afterward is, they have departed from the path of rectitude, brought disgrace upon themselves, and are, with rapid steps, traveling in the broad road to ruin.

And can any thing be done to change this state of things among the young men of this country? We answer, that much may be done to better the condition of those youths, who, by adversity or neglect, have been deprived of parental instruction, if the better informed portions of each community will act well their part. No one, we think, who is animated by a proper spirit, when he looks to the future destiny of his country, and especially to the present and eternal welfare of the rising generation, can be indifferent or inactive in regard to a matter of so much moment.

Several volumes have been written in the last few years, containing a series of lectures addressed to young men, by writers who are distinguished alike for their natural abilities and their literary attainments; and they justly merit the best wishes of every good citizen for their noble and patriotic efforts in behalf of the young. Their works have been circulated extensively among that class of

young men to whom they were addressed, and have evidently done an immense amount of good. They were written, however, more especially for the benefit of young men engaged in studying the learned professions, or who have already distinguished themselves as men of science and learning. Their influence, therefore, has been confined to a very narrow channel notwithstanding the correctness of the sentiments which they contain. The language and style, and, in many instances, the illustrations of the authors just referred to, are not well adapted to the capacity of a majority of the young men of this country.

This difficulty, we think, has been avoided in the following work. We have, of design, employed the plainest language, and have set forth our ideas in the most simple and familiar style. We have aimed, also, to embrace, in the course of the following lectures, every point to which the attention of the young should be directed—so far, at least, as their physical comfort and their moral and intellectual well-being are concerned—and, at the same time, have not failed to direct attention to those things which bear directly upon man's immortal interests.

This we have done, because we thought it was necessary—because we are well convinced, after close observation for several years, that the young are shamefully neglected in this land, where civil, moral, and religious institutions are so numerous; and because we are well satisfied, that if measures

are not adopted, and that very soon, for the moral improvement of the young in our midst, some of whom are to be our lawmakers, rulers, and guides, at least in a civil and social point of view, the stars and stripes of our beloved country will soon trail in the dust, and no one will be left to build up and sustain her institutions. Already have things come to such a pass, in our legislative and senatorial halls, that those who have been chosen by the people to enact laws and to transact the business of state, can not meet and remain together for any length of time, for this purpose, without getting into a quarrel, which commonly ends in a general melee, if not in some thing else more disgraceful. And why, we ask, is this the state of morals among those in high places as well as among those in the lower walks of life? It is from the fact that they have not been properly instructed in the days of their youth.

It is generally the case, with most authors at least, in presenting their works to the public, to offer some apology for so doing; and we think it proper that they should. And if the reader will examine the last two or three paragraphs preceding this, he will find the substance of our apology for writing and presenting the following lectures to the public.

In writing the work now before the reader, we have very often referred to the writings of other authors upon the various topics discussed, for in-

struction, and acknowledge ourselves greatly indebted to them for the information they have given us. It may be seen, also, that their writings have been quoted in quite a number of instances. This was often done from memory, as their works were not before us; while, in other instances, we were more fortunate. We think the reader will perceive the appropriateness of each quotation, and its immediate connection with the subject under consideration.

Our object has been, as before stated, to benefit the young and rising generation. How well we may have succeeded in our undertaking, we must leave the developments of the future to decide. If the present work should be instrumental in elevating the condition of the young, morally and intellectually—if it should induce them to forsake the paths of vice, and walk in the way of virtue —above all, if it should influence them to obey the commands of their Creator, to seek his favor, and to strive for eternal life, we shall have accomplished the great end which we have had in view.

J. W. KASEY.

Big Spring, *April* 15*th*, 1858.

ESSAY.

While it may be said that the young men of this country deserve credit for their politeness, affability, and general good behavior, it is also true that they are sadly deficient as to general information. We have no doubt but that they are as well informed in this country, as a general thing, as in any other country in the world; but it is still lamentably true, that not more than one out of every hundred has acquired that degree of intellectual knowledge that is commensurate with his opportunities. It may be said that they are honest, that they have acquired habits of industry, and that they are just in all their dealings with others. It may truly be said, that a large majority of them have a high regard for the rights of others, and that they would not stoop so low, in trading, as to take advantage of the ignorant in any business transaction whatever; and yet thousands are to be found in our midst, who are ignorant almost of the first principles of knowledge.

To acquire knowledge, investigation, study, and diligent research are necessary. And, with most young men, this is quite an irksome task. And it is, therefore, a difficult matter to get them

to undertake it with that degree of determination and energy which are necessary to success. Hence, a very small portion of their time is spent in the acquisition of knowledge. The result is, they are ignorant of all the leading questions and general topics of the day. If young men would pay as much attention to the means of acquiring knowledge as they should, they would be as wise at the age of fifteen, and as well prepared for the common avocations of life, as they are, under existing circumstances, at the age of twenty-one. But day after day, and year after year, is carelessly thrown away by them, and they grow up to manhood wholly unprepared for its duties and responsibilities.

It is to be deeply regretted that hundreds and thousands of young men in this country are growing up in ignorance, who evidently possess superior intellectual faculties. Many of them have minds capable of grasping a vast amount of useful knowledge, of mastering all the leading questions of the day. They might stand high among the great men of this nation, and influence for weal the political and moral destiny of this country, and might justly be classed with the most learned and scientific men of this age; and yet, strange to tell, they are spending their time in idleness, and seem to have no aspirations after true greatness.

These things are true, not only of the poor, who are apt to excuse themselves on the score

of poverty, but among young men in independent circumstances, who have every facility that heart could wish for the acquisition of knowledge. If they had among them but few books, and but few institutions of learning, and lived in some dark corner of the earth, but little could be expected of them. But as it is, in this country, knowledge is diffused in almost every conceivable way, and it may be accumulated rapidly by all who will but use the means to that end.

To see clearly illustrated the truth of what we have just said, go to any of the principal commercial houses of this country, and you are there met by a polite young gentleman, who seems to be free and easy in his manners, and is quite willing to accommodate you to any reasonable extent. You will soon perceive that he is well posted in the business in which he is engaged, that he can give you the technical phrases pertaining to that business, and that, so far as that particular branch of business is concerned, he is not at a loss, either for language or ideas, in giving you all the information you may wish. But now, business having been attended to, sit down for a few moments' conversation on natural or revealed religion; or on intellectual, moral, or physical science; or upon any other subject that does not necessarily bear upon his line of business; and nine times out of ten you will find that he has paid but little attention to these things, if he is not altogether ignorant of them.

The same is true when applied to those engaged in mechanical, agricultural, and professional pursuits. That young mechanic understands his trade; and to examine his works you will soon discover marks of genius, and evidences of mechanical skill; but now introduce, as a topic for conversation, some literary or scientific question, and you will soon find that he is perfectly ignorant in regard to it. And so it is with young men generally, be their trade or profession what it may.

And why, we ask, is this the case? It does not originate in a want of capacity, of educational facilities, or opportunities for acquiring information. What then? It is the result of neglecting the means of acquiring knowledge, with which every young man in this country is so abundantly furnished. They will examine every principle and rule connected with their trade or profession, and make themselves familiar with every point that bears, either directly or indirectly, upon their regular business, but, beyond this, they seem to have no curiosity. Having mastered their trade, they are satisfied, so far as intellectual attainments are concerned; and, instead of studying history and natural science, instead of having the mind well stored with intellectual and useful knowledge, they have no taste for the one, no desire for the other, and are not qualified for society or for any rational enjoyment.

Now we are aware of the fact, that a majority

of the young men among us have to spend most of their time in attending to their regular business, and that its peculiar claims should be properly attended to; but, at the same time, we are satisfied that, if they would spend their hours of relaxation from business in studying some branch of natural science, or in pursuit of intellectual knowledge, they would soon acquire a vast amount of useful information, and be qualified to fill the most responsible stations among men.

Old men are now to be found in this country, who have lived all their lives in obscurity and ignorance, from the fact that they paid no attention to the means of acquiring knowledge in their younger days, who might now, if they had pursued a different course, be standing side by side with the greatest orators, statesmen, and philosophers of the present age. And, what is still worse, there are youths in this country, in whose behalf nature has been lavish of her gifts—whose minds are capable of very great expansion and improvement—who are surrounded with the most favorable circumstances for the acquisition of general information, and who might, in a short time, distinguish themselves as men of the highest order of talents, but who, for want of energy and industry in the pursuit of knowledge, are destined to walk in the humbler paths of life, unknown to those by whom they might have been honored.

This last reflection is enough to sadden the

heart of every genuine patriot. In fact, no individual who is prepared to appreciate the value of knowledge, can look at this subject in its true light, and not feel a deep interest in the mental as well as moral improvement of the young men of this country. That man who has no desire for the diffusion of knowledge among the young of all classes of society, has but little regard for the welfare of his country, and would not do to risk if her interests were in danger.

To the young reader, then, we will say, in the language of the wise man, "get wisdom, and with all thy getting, get understanding." Be not among the ignorant, who seem never to look beyond their physical wants and necessities, but seek earnestly for a liberal share of general information, and rest not satisfied until you have obtained it. Resolve to write your name high up in the temple of knowledge; and, if you do not excell all others, you will at least obtain for yourself an honorable position among the wise and the learned, and open to your mind a wide field for contemplation and enjoyment.

LECTURES TO YOUNG MEN.

LECTURE I.

THE NECESSITY OF KNOWLEDGE.

In all ages of the world much has been thought, said, and written about knowledge. It was the theme of inspired prophets and apostles, has been earnestly sought for by all who were capable of appreciating its value, and has, in lovely and sublime strains, been presented to our minds as a means of present and eternal happiness, not only by moralists and philanthropists, but by the wisest and best men of all nations.

Knowledge has been the means of averting impending danger to communities and nations, has shielded them from the attacks of their enemies, placed their laws and institutions upon a firm and solid basis, opened channels of communication from one nation to another, and, in a civil point of view, has, in many instances, elevated them to the highest point of improvement and greatness. It enlarges the views, and controls, to a proper extent, the feelings of those by whom laws are enacted; nerves the arm of those whose

duty it is to execute them, and thus secures the largest amount of prosperity and happiness to those who are governed by them. It expands the intellectual powers of the man, gives proper tone and direction to his mind, enlarges his sphere of usefulness, quickens all his energies, and qualifies him to contend successfully against the greatest difficulties.

Not so, however, of ignorance. Where it prevails, the worst state of society is to be looked for. Where it controls the mind, there is anarchy and confusion, disloyalty and misery, and almost every evil that we can possibly imagine. "Judgment is perverted by prejudices, and reason subjected to vicious affections. The conduct, which ought to have been the result of judgment and prudence, is impelled by sense and appetite; and he whose powers, had they been rightly improved, would have allied him to angels, and stamped upon his nature the image of God, is reduced to a situation little superior to the irrational part of the creation; the subject of instinct, and the slave of passion."

Viewed in this light, it will be seen that ignorance is the greatest evil with which mankind can be afflicted. This fact has long been evident to the minds of all serious observers. But however true this may be, many persons are to be found, who are ever ready to stand forth as the advocates of ignorance; and are willing, whenever the opportunity offers, to assist in extending

"the empire of darkness." As to the object that such men have in view, we are not prepared to determine. It would seem, however, that their object is to increase their importance on the one hand or on the other, to keep the multitude in darkness, that they may the more easily accomplish their evil designs among them. Be this as it may, all such men should be looked upon as determined enemies to their fellow-beings. Fortunately for the young men of this country, but few of this class of men have the nerve to express their sentiments upon this subject, or to advocate the cause of ignorance in any way before the public.

Young persons, however, should be on their guard, for this class of men are trying in a secret way to envelope the minds of the people in darkness, and their movements can not be too closely observed.

We adopt the noble sentiments contained in the following language: "One thing, however, is evident, humanity, reason, and religion, all join in condemning the attempt, and all conspire to prevent its success. Thank God, it can not be successful. The sun of knowledge is risen, and darts toward the meridian; and though those who "love darkness rather than light," may look out from their murky dens, and hoot at the diffusive radiance, its orb stands too high for them to reach, and its beams spread too wide for them to contract."

In this country, as well as in various other nations of the earth, thousands and millions are busily engaged in the diffusion of knowledge among the people. They feel satisfied that it is the great lever by which mankind is to be elevated from the thralldom of ignorance, superstition, and vice, to a position where they may bask in the sunshine of science, and breathe the pure air of civilization and refinement; and where they will be prepared to enjoy the blessings which our benevolent Creator has offered to those who will obey his laws, and be governed by the dictates of reason and common sense. Taking this view of the subject, no one will be surprised at the efforts that are being made for the general diffusion of knowledge.

But we notice, more especially, the necessity, or the importance of knowledge.

First, it is the source of unbounded pleasure. He, whose mind is well stored with information, has constant access to fountains of pleasure to which the ignorant are entire strangers. His capacious mind and vivid imagination are incessantly feasting upon the monuments of art, the beauties of nature, and the developments of science. Wealth, honor, and fame do not afford him half the amount of pleasure that he enjoys, while he beholds the harmonious movements of the heavenly bodies, the regular operations of the machinery of nature, the splendor of the universe, and the wonderful adaptation of all, with infinite

skill, to the condition and wants of the human family. When he is not employed in the common avocations of life, these things afford constant exercise to the powers of his mind, and produce pleasure of a kind more pure and elevated than can possibly be found in any of the gratifications of sense.

He acquired a thirst for knowledge in the days of his youth. He sought for it earnestly upon the right, and upon the left, with a zeal and determination which are always rewarded with success. He had, it may be, to contend with difficulties that were almost insurmountable, to submit to a great deal of hardship, and many privations; but now he stands upon a lofty eminence, with nothing to obstruct his view, and the face of nature in beautiful array, is spread out before his anxious gaze; and with peculiar delight he surveys the sublime scenes around him.

He may perceive that some parts of the machinery are complicated, and wonderfully mysterious in their movements, some things beyond the powers of his mind to comprehend, but these things seem only to quicken his energies, while he makes one new discovery after another. And while he beholds the earth clothed in beauty at his feet, the firmament decked with beauty above his head, the sun going forth "as a strong man to run a race," and the stars, which, to his mind, are so many habitable worlds, floating through immensity, pleasurable sensations are produced

upon the mind, which cause those delightful emotions that mortal tongue can not describe.

But how different from this, is the case of that man who is destitute of knowledge! He sees no beauty in nature, nor does he entertain any of those lofty views of her sublimity and grandeur. The stars, to him, are so many spots of light in the distant sky. The clear evidences of Divine power and infinite skill, as manifested in every valley and upon every hilltop, in every plant and flower, as well as in the soft and pleasant breeze that fans his brow, are all unobserved by him, and exert no special influence upon his mind. Amid all, he stands unmoved, thinking only of the present, and of surrounding circumstances, as they bear immediately upon his worldly interests.

His views of things are so contracted and narrow, that he is wholly unprepared to appreciate any of the blessings of life. He is so self-important, so wise in his own conceit, that he will not listen to the voice of instruction; for, already, in his own estimation, "he is wiser than seven men that can render a reason." The result is just what might be expected by all sensible men. He is wrong in theory, worse in practice; the dupe of every new-fangled notion, prone to fanaticism and superstition, and is a monster to be dreaded in civilized society. By his influence, he leads others into the paths of vice, misery, and destruction, and thus counteracts the efforts of the wise and good in all their attempts to ameliorate the condition of man,

and raise him higher in the scale of intelligence and happiness.

But knowledge is a source of pleasure, from the fact, that it gives man proper control of himself. "Ignorance is the parent of vice," and wherever it prevails, it debases man, and makes of him an abject slave—a slave to his natural propensities. The faculties of the mind and the functions of the body, are enchained by the appetites and passions which always prove to be the worst tyrants in the world. He may, at times, in view of his associations in life, get a glimpse of better things, and have some faint desires for freedom from the thralldom of ignorance and the reign of darkness, but he has not the moral courage to throw off the restraints of passion, and enjoy the liberty that is realized by the "wise and prudent."

His intellectual vision is so completely obscured by ignorance, that he can not see with sufficient distinctness, a higher state of joy and pleasure to arouse him to action, and prompt him to those efforts by which he might be made free. "A slave to his appetites and propensities, he debases the man into the brute, blunts the edge of every tender feeling, and hardens himself against every generous emotion. Conscience, so repeatedly insulted, ceases to warn him of danger; and his passions, rendered licentious by indulgence, carry him beyond the power of resistance, to every object they propose, however unlawful, and however injurious. The frequency of practice con-

firms his habits, till they become too imperious to admit of the smallest hope of reformation, and leave us no other prospect than that of a rational and immortal creature, formed for communion with his God in the world, and intended to participate his glory in the world to come, filling up the measure of his iniquities, and ripening for destruction." * * * "This is, perhaps, the reason why such characters, in the intervals of labor, fly from themselves, and fill up their leisure hours with the grossest indulgence of intemperance. Intellectual vigor they do not possess; and the ambition of improvement they do not feel; they shun the company of the wise and sober, where they sink by comparison; and, mingling with the dregs of society, they corrupt by their practice, and destroy by their example."

While, on the other hand, knowledge bursts asunder the involving clouds of darkness that shroud the mind of men in ignorance, and enables him to view himself in the proper light; to view himself as a being possessing reason and judgment, which distinguish him from the beasts that perish, and constitute the true dignity of his nature. It breaks off the shackles of ignorance, by which he has been bound, lifts him above that which is low and sensual, liberates him from the sway of his passions, and enables him to appreciate and to enjoy the rich provisions of a beneficent Creator. Let all young persons, then, remember, that in order to enjoy substantial and

elevated pleasure, the mind must be enlightened, and natural propensities must be controlled by the powers of reason.

In the next place, knowledge is necessary, from the fact, that it is the foundation of correct moral sentiments, and a consistent course of conduct.

Where knowledge is generally diffused among a people, they are capable of enacting just and wholesome laws, and such as will secure their interests and promote their happiness. But if knowledge, in any way is prevented from spreading itself through all the inferior ranks of society, "disorganization, savage independence, and barbarian stupidity must be the unavoidable consequences." It was said by the wise man, "Knowledge is power, and wisdom is better than strength." It is knowledge that constitutes the great difference that may be perceived between savage and civilized society. For if you will examine the history of all civilized nations, you can but observe that they have owed the improvement of their condition, to the improvement of the mind. "The comforts and conveniences of life, useful arts, salutary laws, and good governments, are all the productions of knowledge."

To see more clearly the truth of this proposition, let your mind dwell upon the condition of those nations where ignorance prevails; where the seeds of knowledge have not been scattered, and where the minds of the people are uncultivated, and in a state of darkness, and you

will soon discover that selfishness is the predominant principle. They seen to have no idea of the great principles of justice by which men must be governed, if they would mutually promote each other's interest and happiness. Benevolence, that noble principle, which gives to the wise and good those expansive views and feelings, while they look at the misfortunes and miseries of their fellow-beings, and prompts them to a course of action that is so beneficial in its tendency, is scarcely ever heard of among them. Being governed by false maxims, they are dissolute in their manners, and give a loose rein to their unbridled passions. Having no correct idea of justice, they will cheat and defraud each other without remorse of conscience; and seem to feel, at the same time, that they are violating no principle of justice or honor. Wherever you go, among such a people, you will see the sad evidences of the reign of ignorance.

And now you may propose to enlighten their minds by the dissemination of knowledge, and to furnish them with a set of laws that will produce a better state of things in an intellectual, civil, and moral point of view, and you will be looked upon as though you were infringing upon their rights, and they will oppose all your efforts, however honest you may be in your intentions.

"How often have the salutary measures of the patriotic statesman, the discoveries of the sagacious philosopher, the improvements of the in-

genious artist, and the benevolent institutions of the disinterested philanthropist been rendered abortive and useless by popular ignorance and popular prejudice. The despotism of ignorance is of the most imperious nature. Its possession of the human mind, at the age of maturity, is firm and resisting; and it is only by a kind of force that knowledge gains admission."

But how different is the condition of those whose faculties and powers have been brought into proper exercise, and directed to their proper objects! What an elevated position do they occupy, when compared with those who dwell in the regions of darkness! The faculties of their minds are in a high state of cultivation, and they are prepared to appreciate the advantages of general information. Here the "patriotic statesman," the "disinterested philanthropist," and the "ingenious artist" are respected and honored; and the institutions of benevolence among them, indicate that they can feel for the poor and the distressed, and that they are willing to supply their wants.

Here they are governed by the principles of justice, which prompt them to regard, strictly, each others rights and interests. They are dignified in their associations, refined in their manners, and patriotic and hospitable in their feelings. And as you move among them from time to time, you will see evidences, not only of wealth and prosperity, but of greatness and strength, and will be ready to exclaim—"How lovely are thy

dwelling places." These are facts, in regard to the influence of knowledge upon the minds and conduct of men, with which every young man should make himself familiar.

Again, knowledge is indispensably necessary, from the fact that it alone can qualify us for usefulness and true greatness.

To be useful, is a duty enjoined upon us by our Creator, and is enforced upon our minds by our associations in life, and the necessities of our fellow-beings around us. To be great, in the true sense of that term, is not only desirable, but praiseworthy; and to seek after it, in moderation, and in the use of the proper means, will be looked upon as being right according to the strictest rules of moral philosophy. In fact, the inspired writers encourage us to imitate the example of those who have become truly great, by their deeds of charity, and their noble efforts in the cause of humanity.

Ignorance destroys the usefulness of men. It is almost impossible to induce an ignorant man to do any thing by which others may be benefited. Of what service can he be to the community or nation in which he lives? The causes of virtue, benevolence, morality and religion, prosper as well, if not better, without him than with him; for his mind is so completely darkened by ignorance, that he is wholly unprepared to appreciate the advantages of either. He has never traveled beyond the precincts of his own immediate neigh-

borhood, and knows but little of the world, and still less of the real wants of the human family. Instead of assisting those whose object is to bless mankind, he stands directly in their way, and opposes all their measures.

Law, in the estimation of such a man, is a selfish and unfeeling tyrant; and he obeys its mandates, not as a matter of principle, but from constraint. The executioners of the law are looked upon, by him, as being so many agents, employed by this tyrant, to oppress and grind the poor into the dust, and to lord it over their fair heritage. Education, as viewed by him, is a useless ornament to the mind, and ministers only to pride and ambition. Religion, according to his theory, is a well-arranged system, the object of which is to accomplish the evil designs of those who are seeking for power and earthly glory, and to secure their worldly interests. He has no use for the Bible, for he is satisfied that he is a good theologian without it. He professes to be guided by the voice of nature, and the dictates of reason, while it is evident, to those who are better informed, that he is governed by his natural inclinations.

Now, can such a man be useful? Will he ever gladden the hearts of the poor and needy, by supplying their wants? Will he ever lead in those wise and patriotic measures, which, upon a large scale, are calculated to promote the welfare of his fellow-beings? No. He is too selfish and

too unfeeling. He is deaf to the cry of distress, and blind to his own best interests, and the interests of his country.

He does not care even for the welfare of his own family. "His house was never sanctified to God by prayer and thanksgiving; it is the abode of licentiousness and discord. His children are uninstructed; they grow up in perverseness; they mature in iniquity. He is a father without authority, and without honor. He entails upon his offspring the curse of his example, and they, in return, curse his memory."

On the other hand, when a man is well-informed and governed by the dictates of wisdom, he is prepared to take a more comprehensive view of things. He realizes that there are others in the world beside himself, that while he has a right to claim the attention and assistance of others, they have a right to claim the same at his hands. He is not unmindful of the fact, that all men have "certain inalienable rights" guaranteed to them by their God, and by their country, and upon these rights he has no disposition to trample.

And more than this, he sees that while some are rich and powerful, others are poor and feeble. That while some are the observed of all observers, others are entirely overlooked and left to pine away in wretchedness and misery. And while scenes of this kind, one after another, are presented to his view, his heart begins to swell with

benevolent emotions; and soon he may be seen, like the true patriot, actively engaged in supplying the wants of the distressed. He at once, though young in years, becomes a guardian of the law, a firm and active supporter of all civil and religious institutions, a lover of good order and harmony in society, an advocate of the right of private judgment, is among the foremost in all benevolent enterprises, feels a deep interest in the prosperity of his country, and is always delighted when he sees her institutions in a flourishing condition.

This man is truly great, because he is eminently useful; because he is untiring in his efforts to better the condition of all classes of society. Cicero, Hannibal, Alexander and Napoleon were all great men in the common acceptation of the term, but if you will examine their history, you will find that their footsteps were marked with blood, and their career with destruction to the best interests of men. They were great to butcher their fellow-beings, to trample upon their rights, and destroy their property.

Let the young reader remember then, that if he would be truly great, he must be wise, patriotic, and benevolent. He must be willing, not only to fill high and honorable offices in society, but to visit the abodes of poverty and ignorance. He must be ready to assist the needy, and to give instruction to those who are in the regions of darkness.

But, finally, knowledge enables us to make every thing subservient to our purposes, and conducive to our happiness.

It points out, with certainty, the path that leads to prosperity and ultimate success in life, and with equal certainty to those things which minister to our wants, and increase our comforts and joys.

Examine, if you please, the pages of history, and see the physical condition of those who live where ignorance prevails; where there are no institutions for the diffusion of knowledge, and where the light of science has never been permitted to shine; where the means of civilization and general information have been steadily withheld from the people, that their minds might be kept in their "native state of imbecility." And you will not have proceeded very far in this examination, before you will be fully prepared to admit the truth of the proposition now under consideration.

Why is it, that among such people, there is so much poverty and misery? Why are they destitute of all the comforts and conveniences of life? Why is there such a wide difference between their condition and the condition of those who live in this country, and enjoy the blessings of civilization? Their sun shines as brightly as ours; they have as many gentle showers of rain and refreshing breezes as we; their lands are productive, their local advantages are numerous, and yet, their condition is but a step above that of the

"beasts that perish." Hence we ask, why does the traveler among them almost invariably find them in a state of nudity and starvation?

This question is easily answered. They are living in ignorance, and have never studied the natural advantages of their country. While all nature stands in readiness to minister to their wants, and offers them her services, their eyes are closed to the fact, and they live and die in wretchedness.

Contemplate for a moment the condition of those who live under the boughs of the tree of knowledge — who enjoy the light of civilization and the benefits of scientific investigation. How rich is their portion, and how elevated their condition! Their physical wants and real necessities have been taken into consideration. They have studied successfully the resources of nature, and now, like a skillful physician, having discovered the nature of the disease, they find but little difficulty in applying the remedy.

Assisted by the light of science, they have found the key of knowledge, and with it they have unlocked the great storehouse of nature; they have penetrated her secret recesses, and found something, in every department, that is more or less useful. And while investigating the rich provisions of nature for the supply of man's wants, the faculties of the mind were called into proper exercise, and directed to new and more important and desirable objects.

They have discovered the great secrets of nature, and her laws have been laid hold upon; and now the earth, the air, the waters seem to have been converted into one vast machine to minister to man's necessities, and to ameliorate his condition.

Diseases, in many instances, are arrested in their incipiency. The lurking-places of miasma have been discovered and destroyed. The electric flash has been turned aside from our dwellings, and has been converted into a messenger of intelligence, and daily and hourly is sent from one end of our nation to the other. And to some extent, the monster death himself seems to be stayed in his career of destruction. And now, in every valley and upon every hilltop the people are prosperous and happy, and cheerfulness and contentment sit undisturbed upon every brow.

A word to you, young reader, and we will close this lecture. If you would be happy, if you would be able to control your passions and tempers, if you would be useful to others, and enjoy the comforts and conveniences of life, seek for the path that leads to the crystal fountain of knowledge. Go to that fountain and drink, until the faculties and powers of your mind, under its expansive influence, shall fully develop themselves. And then you will be prepared to breast the storms of life, and live to some purpose in the world. For the old adage is still true, "A little learning is dangerous; drink deep of the fountain, or taste not at all."

LECTURE II.

THE KIND OF KNOWLEDGE TO BE OBTAINED.

We spent, not long since, some twelve months in the town (now the city,) of H——, on the Ohio river. During most of that time, several gentlemen in the place kept up a regular debating society. We had been there but a short time, before we were invited to attend this society and listen to the speeches that were to be made by these gentlemen, upon the various topics that were to be discussed by them from time to time. We did so whenever we had the opportunity, with pleasure, and we hope to some profit.

The question discussed the first evening that we attended, was this: "Does civilization or the general diffusion of knowledge, enhance the happiness of man?" We were somewhat surprised that this question should be discussed, by gentlemen of learning and talents, in a town where there is as much intelligence as can be found in any town of the same size in the west. We wondered then, as we have often done since, how any man, of ordinary observation, could, after witnessing the wonderful effects of knowledge, its tendency to elevate the condition of man socially, morally, and intellectually, argue, that we, as a people, would be better off, if we were living in

a state of heathenism, than we are in our present condition.

After having paid some attention to this matter for some years past, we are well convinced that quite a number of men are to be found in this country, who contend that the general diffusion of knowledge is not conducive to the happiness of man. They take the ground, that an infinitely wise Being in giving man his position in the world, throws around him, at the same time, the means by which he may acquire, without effort, all the information that he needs, all for which he is responsible. Hence, they maintain that they are under no obligations to seek information, that they will, as a necessary consequence, in view of their associations, obtain all that is necessary.

Now, the secret of the matter is, they are satisfied that as knowledge increases, responsibility increases in the same proportion. And this last is what they wish to avoid; and hence, it is almost impossible to induce them to use the means by which knowledge is to be acquired. They suppose that if they are destitute of knowledge, that they will not be held responsible for their conduct; upon the principle, that where little is given, little will be required.

Well, in most things, this is true; but nine times out of ten, it is not true when applied to knowledge. And, especially in this country, where all are furnished with the means of information. Ignorance of the law, is no excuse for him who

has violated it, when he might have been familiar with its requirements. He who, from ignorance, fails to do his duty, can not be excused, if he has voluntarily refused to use the means by which he might have learned what he ought to do. If we have the capacity for, and the means of, acquiring information, and are still ignorant, we are just as guilty in the sight of an all-wise Being, and in the estimation of men, as if we were to neglect the performance of any duty, however clearly and positively enjoined upon us.

This principle is clearly set forth in the volume of inspiration. The Divine Being there says, by one of His prophets: "Because you have rejected knowledge, I will reject you." It is evident from this language, that they might have been in possession of the amount of knowledge required, for they are represented as rejecting it. The ground upon which they were rejected was, that they were ignorant, and at the same time, were in possession of the means of information. And for this last they were held accountable. Thus, we perceive, that we are responsible, not only for the use, or proper application of knowledge, but for neglecting the means of acquiring it. Every young man should remember that this principle holds good at the present day, and will to the end of time, in temporal things, as well as in spiritual. If we are so ignorant, from our inattention to the means of information, that we are of no service to so-

ciety, or to our fellow-beings generally, we surely will not go unpunished.

It may be remarked here, by way of more fully illustrating this point, that the only hope which some men have of eternal life beyond the isthmus of time is, that they are ignorant of the plan of salvation, as set forth in the Gospel of Christ; and they suppose if they remain so, that that ignorance will plead for them in the great day of accounts. What a vain calculation! Can any reasonable individual suppose, that after the light of revelation has been steadily poured upon man's pathway from the cradle to the tomb, that after messengers, one after another, have been sent to point out to him the course that he should pursue, and, that after the volume of nature has been spread out before his eyes to urge him to walk in the path of duty, that he will be permitted to escape punishment, and enjoy endless happiness, simply because he lived and died in ignorance? Surely not. This is a sandy foundation, and no man should build upon it.

To the young men of America, let me speak of better things. Throw off the shackles of ignorance. Take a higher stand, and a more reasonable position. Strive lawfully for the prize. Seek not to screen yourself from responsibility by living in ignorance, but use all the means in your power to acquire knowledge. And if with it comes responsibility, meet it like a man of courage and

intelligence who had prepared himself well for the contest, and in every conflict you will be victorious, and reap at last, a rich reward.

We design noticing, however, more especially, the kind of knowledge to be obtained.

We remark here that there are so many kinds of knowledge that are important, as being a means of usefulness and happiness to man, that we shall have to pass by several departments, and leave them altogether unnoticed. As we design noticing in another lecture the importance of religious knowledge, we purpose in this, to direct the attention of young men to that which is more general and practical, as well as moral in its character and tendency, and relates to men and things in this life.

In the first place, then, we should acquire a knowledge of ourselves.

We should be well acquainted with our own mental and physical powers, capabilities, and qualifications. One great object to be kept in view, by those situated as we are, should be the welfare of those around us, as our own interests and welfare are intimately connected with theirs. A very important inquiry with us, then, should be, what can we do that will have a beneficial tendency in reference to ourselves and others?

Every young man should inquire, as soon as he comes to the years of manhood, what course shall I pursue that I may be successful in life, and secure the great ends of my present exist-

ence? In what department shall I labor? Where can I be most useful? Shall I handle the spade, the sword, or the scepter? Have I the voice of eloquence that will thrill the minds of the multitude, and move them to the adoption of those principles and measures that will best secure their interests and safety; or will it be better for me to walk in the more quiet paths of life, and operate in some sphere of action that is more limited?

Study to know the number of talents that you possess, and how you may employ them to the best advantage. Rest not satisfied with a mere casual knowledge of yourself, but continue the investigation until you are thoroughly acquainted with your mental and physical powers. And then it will be, comparatively, an easy matter for you so to shape your course in life, that you may be eminently useful to all with whom you may be associated.

"Know thyself," was a maxim of one of the seven wise men of Greece. And a greatly advanced state of civilization, famed for mental and moral improvement, has only demonstrated more fully, the importance of giving it our attention. Want of self-knowledge has led many men to seek for, and to obtain the wrong position, so far as their usefulness was concerned, however pure their motives, or honest their intentions. Men are often found in the halls of the Legislature and Senate that should be in the workshop. Some in the Cabinet that should be on our frontiers, where

they would have more skill in guarding the interests of our country than they ever will have in their present position.

Some are holding the reins of government, that had much better be holding the plow-handles, pushing the plane, or engaged in some other business better adapted to their capacity. Many have attempted to guide the affairs of State, who, if they had followed some mechanical pursuit, and given their mechanical genius an opportunity of developing itself, would have been more useful, and at the same time universally admired on account of their skill and ability. It is not unfrequently the case that men attempt to preach the Gospel of Christ, when it is evident that they had better be "hearers of the word," as they are not skillful in the science of theology. And thus we might go on in regard to many of the learned professions if it were necessary.

Men often find after it is too late to admit of any remedy, that by not examining strictly their business qualifications early in life, that they are pursuing the wrong course, and have engaged in a business not suited to their capacity. And as a natural consequence they have failed in every effort to get along in the world. Many, after making repeated efforts, and having failed in every instance, have become disheartened, and relaxed all their energies; and could not be induced afterward to engage in business of any kind whatever. Disappointed in their expectations, and having

no hope of a better state of things, such men often seek to relieve their feelings by associating with those who belong to the worst grade of society, and in some instances by putting an end to their own existence.

But, we should not only know our strength but our weakness. It is said by the wise, that all men have their failings, their imperfections. These should be carefully studied, and well defined in our own minds. We should find out, if possible, when and where we are most liable to fail, where we are most liable to yield to those influences that will have an injurious effect upon the mind, and lead us off from the path of duty. And we should learn to guard particularly those points. For if we fail here, we shall be very apt to be disappointed in our calculations, not so much for want of energy, but for want of prudence and reflection.

Now, if young men would only pay proper attention to this matter at an early day, and become well acquainted with the peculiar abilities which they possess, they would be fully prepared, in due time, to make a judicious selection as to business, and as to associations in society, and escape many of the calamities to which men are so liable in this world. And in addition to this, they would be successful in life, eminently useful to others, prominent members of society, and admired by all who are capable of appreciating their manly efforts.

Again, we should acquire a knowledge of others—of men in general.

This department of knowledge, to a man of business, is the most important branch of worldly knowledge, to which we could direct the attention of young men. They should carefully examine every thing that serves to throw light upon this subject, for they can but perceive in studying the habits, motives, and character of mankind, that it is a subject full of interest—full of instruction. But, unfortunately for most young men in this country, although many of them are inclined to study and investigate other subjects, they pay but little attention to this.

We should learn first, in the study of individual character, how to classify properly. In every community there are different classes of society, different grades of character. Now if we fail to distinguish one class from another, and are unable to point out the marks that indicate the different grades of character, we shall study individual character to but little profit to ourselves.

We remark here, that almost every community may be divided into five distinct classes. First, there is a class that possess wealth in abundance, but they are proud, haughty, and tyrannical in their disposition, and have but little regard for the feelings of others. The second class may be said to be wealthy, but they are unassuming in their manners, willing to accommodate others, and are always ready to minister to the wants of the

needy. The third class is in medium circumstances, so far as wealth is concerned, but in other respects, may be compared to the second class. The fourth class consists of those whose circumstances are quite limited, but they are honorable, high minded, and industrious, and justly merit the esteem of all good men. The fifth class consists of those who have nothing, and want nothing over and above what will supply their present necessities, and minister to their ungoverned appetites and passions. To better their condition, seems to be almost an impossibility; for they are incapable of appreciating the advantages of general information, and seem really to prefer their present condition to one that would be much better.

By thus arranging communities into distinct classes, our ideas of individual character will be more clear, and we will have much better conceptions of the main springs of human actions, in all departments of society.

Whatever may be our occupation or profession, whatever may be the position that we may wish to occupy in society, we can not be too well posted in regard to the character of those around us. In fact, our success, in a business point of view, depends mainly upon our knowledge of mankind. And if we are destitute of this kind of knowledge, we will be almost certain to make an entire failure, in every thing of a business character, that we undertake.

And more especially is this true, in the case of

those whose business it is to watch and guide the affairs of State, and to govern and control the great body of the people. Weak will be his efforts and slow his progress, if he aims to do so, without a knowlege of the character of those who are to be guided and governed.

Quite a number of men are to be found, who are patriotic in their sentiments and feelings, and have correct ideas of the constitution and laws of their country, and of the policy that should regulate the conduct of one nation toward another, but when they come to investigate the condition of the "local and natural man," the motives by which he is actuated, "and to follow out the theorems of the senate to the daily comforts of the cottage," they seem to be altogether deficient.

They can suggest measures that are patriotic and wise, and if they were adopted would have a beneficial tendency, and they seem really to feel a deep interest in the welfare of the people, but they lack that useful and practical information in regard to their special character, without which they can be of but little service to them. Their knowledge of human nature is so limited, and their method of associating with men so awkward, that they absolutely seem to lose their influence, just in the same proportion that they mix with the multitude. And while their wise counsels should be eagerly listened to by the people, they are disposed to treat them with contempt, and pass them by altogether unnoticed.

Again, we should acquire a knowledge of mankind in a national point of view.

The people of every nation have their peculiar traits of character. There is something in their peculiar habits, manners and customs, that distinguish them from the inhabitants of all other nations. We should remember that there are national instincts, sentiments, and characteristics, that are to be studied and well understood, if we would be well prepared to get along smoothly in the world. If a young man fails to acquire a knowledge of these national traits, sentiments, and peculiarities, he will constantly find himself at a loss to know how to act, so as to succeed well in what he has undertaken. He will often find that his course of conduct is not well adapted to the peculiar habits of those with whom he is surrounded, and that there is a want of fitness in his style and method of getting along with them.

That the point, under consideration, may be more distinctly seen, let us suppose that an American citizen, with all his distinctive sentiments and feelings, his mind full of lofty notions in regard to the institutions of his country, and proud of "the place of his nativity," should go into a community of Frenchmen, Scotchmen, or Germans, to engage in business for a length of time; and let us suppose that he has but little knowledge of their habits or dispositions, and, that without regard to either, he carries on business according to the style and customs of his native country. Is

it probable that he will succeed to any great extent?

No. There will be to them something strange and peculiar in his turn, and his manner of associating with them, will not suit their rules and regulations in this respect, and, before he can accomplish any thing of importance among them, he must become familiar with their peculiarities, and, as far as he can, without compromising correct principles, must adopt their style and method of doing business.

Here, then, we see the importance of paying attention to every thing that will assist in giving us correct ideas of the individual and national character of those with whom we must necessarily associate, if we would successfully prosecute any branch of business. It will afford us greater opportunities of being useful among them, and at the same time, give us correct views of the motives by which they are influenced in all their actions and movements.

Again, we should acquire a knowledge of the means of self-protection.

No one, we presume, will for a moment doubt as to the propriety of learning how to protect himself, for it is said by the wise, and so far as we know has never been successfully controverted, "that self-protection is the first law of our nature."

Now we do not wish to be understood here as having reference to the use of the bowie-knife, the six-shooting revolver, the sword-cane, or any

of those instruments by which so much mischief is often done, but to those influences which have an injurious effect upon the mind and body, and more especially upon the moral conduct, sentiments, and feelings of the man. These are the points that are to be guarded by young men, not by carrying some concealed weapon, or instrument of death, but by having the mind well fortified with that more powerful instrument of self-protection, useful knowledge.

Our bodies are liable to a great many accidents and dangers, and we should be well apprised of the fact, and should learn to be cautious and to guard well the point from which danger in these respects may be expected. Wholesome food, air, exercise, and repose, at the proper time, are necessary to the well-being of the body, and a proper knowledge of, and attention to, the laws designed to regulate the physical constitution will be a means of health, and will enable us to enjoy more fully the comforts of life. While ignorance of, and inattention to, these laws are productive of pain, disease, and premature death.

There are laws also which have special reference to the mind — the proper exercise of the intellectual faculties. They are designed to expand the powers of the mind, on the one hand, and on the other to protect it from all injurious influences. Now a young man can not be too well acquainted with these laws. Knowledge of, and obedience to them, will give health, vigor, and

elasticity to the mind, call forth all its energies, and will qualify him for the attainment of intellectual knowledge and greatness. While ignorance of these laws will lead to their violation, and this to a state but "little superior to idiotism itself."

There are moral laws also, designed for the government of man in a moral point of view. And in acquiring a knowledge of these laws, we are learning to protect ourselves against all immoral influences. Hence they should be studied carefully, and well understood by all. It should be borne in mind by every young man, that our present happiness and eternal well-being depend upon obedience to these laws. He should acquire a knowledge of them from the fact that they have a direct tendency to keep his mind open to improvement, and to the reception of those principles which will tend to form his character and regulate his life. If he will carefully study those laws, he will be enabled to distinguish truth from error, and good from evil; to feel the force of moral obligation, and to perceive the excellences of virtue and morality.

There are thousands of influences to which the young are constantly exposed, which tend directly to poison their minds, to destroy their moral sensibilities, and to lead them into the paths of vice and ruin. And if they are ignorant of the rules by which alone they can distinguish between right and wrong, their position is imminently dangerous.

They are to associate with the world as it is, and not as it should be. And they will find in it many who have disregarded these laws, which have respect to man's moral well-being, and have lived a life of licentiousness, prodigality, and debauch, until they are lost to honor, beyond the reach of moral influence, and now seem to take a fiendish delight in seeking among the virtuous young their future companions.

The first step that such men take, is to deceive the young by false notions of morality. They will paint their side of the picture in rich and glowing colors, and thus lead the young man, step by step, along the path of vice and misery, and before he is aware of his condition, he is almost in sight of the whirlpool of destruction. How important, then, that all young men should acquire a knowledge of the means of self-protection!

Again, you should acquire a knowledge of the laws and customs of your country.

It is expected of every citizen of this country, that he will be a law-abiding man; that he will be a firm supporter of the constitution and laws by which he is to be governed and protected, and that he will induce others to do so, as far as is at all practicable. To do so it is important that you have a correct idea of the nature and character of those laws, and the great objects to be accomplished by them when properly administered.

You should remember that the law, in this

country, is the guardian of our rights and liberties, the source of social order and happiness, and the principal means of protecting our homes and firesides from the encroachments of the lawless and the unprincipled.

But more especially should you be well acquainted with the customs of the country, in all departments of society. Custom, in some respects, has almost the binding force of law. And you should remember that to depart from the well-established customs of good society, is almost as dangerous as to violate some well-defined principle of the civil law. It will require a good deal of close observation to become familiar with customs that vary so much in different communities, but to be ignorant of them is to run the risk of being very unpopular, and to destroy your influence and usefulness altogether.

A young man should never rest satisfied until he has learned well how to conduct himself on all special, as well as on all ordinary occasions. How apt are young men to neglect this matter! To know how to conduct yourself in the social circle, and how to converse in a smooth and agreeable manner, are accomplishments that are very desirable, and will always enable you to make a favorable impression upon the minds of those with whom you may become acquainted. In all your associations with men, whether strangers or acquaintances, whether you are at home or abroad, whether in the streets or in public assemblies,

learn to be dignified in your manners, and to treat all, who deserve it, with the utmost respect and civility.

If a young man will learn the rules of politeness, as practiced by the well-informed, how to pass himself off in good society, and how to conduct himself with becoming propriety, he will soon attract the attention, gain the confidence, and secure the friendship of all those whose character and influence can assist in giving him position in the world.

Finally, you should acquire a knowledge of the sciences, especially those that may be of service to you in the common avocations of life. Whatever kind of business may engage your attention, you will find that a knowledge of the most useful branches of science is almost indispensably necessary. How far you are to push your studies in this direction, will, of course, have to be determined, to some extent, by the circumstances with which you are surrounded. Every young man should, at least, acquire a knowledge of natural and moral philosophy, chemistry, and astronomy; and if it is at all practicable for him to do so, he should study mental philosophy, geology, anatomy, and physiology.

We know that most young men in this country are engaged in some kind of business for a support, that requires their attention most of their time, but still, if they will not waste their time by idleness, and will spend their leisure hours in

studying the sciences just named, they will be astonished, at the end of a few years, to see what rapid progress they have made.

The idea prevails with some, and is warmly advocated by them, that a man engaged in one occupation, need not extend his knowledge beyond it; but this is a false and dangerous error, and no young man should allow himself to be misled by it. We have often thought that this idea has its origin in selfishness. When we see a man bend all his energies into one channel, and direct his whole attention to the business in which he is engaged, while he neglects the means of information upon every other subject, we can but think that he is looking alone to his own individual interest. And we are well satisfied, that, as a general thing, such men have but little or no regard for the welfare and happiness of others.

But we remark here, that it would be impossible for us, in the course of one short lecture, to point out the various kinds of knowledge that may be useful to that man who wishes to be well prepared for the transaction of business, and who desires to be eminently useful to his fellow-beings. So much is to be learned, and there are so many kinds of useful knowledge, and it lies, so to speak, in so many different directions, that a young man, after candid investigation, will have, to a considerable extent, to depend upon his own judgment as to the kind of intellectual and prac-

tical knowledge that he will most need to give proper direction to the powers of his mind; and more especially will this be true, if he intends taking a wide range in his efforts to acquire knowledge.

In conclusion, we would say to the young reader, rest not satisfied until your mind is well stored with intellectual and practical knowledge. Make it a point to learn something every day. It may seem to you, at times, that you are getting along very slow in this matter, but remember that a majority of the great men in this, as well as in other countries, have become so by their unremitting efforts to acquire knowledge. Many of them done so under the most discouraging circumstances, but now they are reaping the rich reward of all their labors. "Go thou and do likewise."

Study man, his weakness, imperfections, and errors. Study the Bible, that you may learn something of the character, perfections, and will of the great Author of your existence; that you may realize your accountability to him, and know how to serve him. Learn how to be useful and happy, how to lighten the burden of others, and to cheer them in their sad and lonely hours; and then, although you sink down to the tomb, you will still live in the memory of those who have been blessed by your efforts.

LECTURE III.

MEANS OF ACQUIRING KNOWLEDGE.

We may say, without fear of contradiction, that the present age affords more facilities and opportunities for the acquisition of knowledge, than any that has preceded it. We are aware that they had their institutions of learning, philosophy, and such like, in Egypt, the city of Athens, and in portions of the Roman empire, and that those who lived in what is commonly called the golden age of the world, had some advantage over us in acquiring a knowledge of the habits and customs of the ancients; but, when compared with the present, it seems to have been almost an age of darkness and ignorance.

Within the last two or three centuries, new discoveries, one after another, have been made. The light of science shines more brightly than ever before. All its branches have been simplified and brought within the comprehension of the most ordinary mind. The path that leads to the temple of knowledge has been made plain, and all who wish to travel that path, can do so with comparative ease; at least he will find no insurmountable difficulties in his way. If a young man, at the present day, will but take the proper steps, and embrace all the opportunities with

which he is favored, he will soon become a man of learning, a man of science, of historical knowledge, and may possess a vast amount of general information. All these may be secured at times, when, otherwise, he would be wholly unemployed.

But, notwithstanding all these advantages, what an astonishing amount of ignorance is to be found throughout nearly every portion of this country! Hundreds and thousands are to be found in every community—those, too, of whom we might have expected better things—who are still groping their way in the dark, blind to their own interests, and traveling at a rapid rate in error's path, that leads inevitably to vice, misery, and destruction. And what aggravates their case, and makes it so much worse with them, is, that they have closed their eyes against the light. They have not only disregarded the means of instruction, in the use of which they might have become wise, but have resisted, successfully, every effort that has been made to enlighten their minds, and to ameliorate their condition in an intellectual point of view, and seem determined to live and die in ignorance.

While such men are to be pitied, they deserve to be severely censured for pursuing a course that varies so much from the views and feelings of those who are more wise in regard to such things, and that is attended with so many evil consequences which they might so easily avoid.

Young men in this country, surrounded as they are with so many circumstances that are favorable to the acquisition of knowledge, should remember that their literary attainments and acquired abilities are expected to correspond with their opportunities. And now, if they are so destitute of either, that they are incapable of doing any thing to benefit themselves or others; so ignorant, that they are imposed upon by those who "lie in wait to deceive," and their rights are trampled upon by those who are always seeking to get the advantage of the weak, they are looked upon, not as those who, by misfortune, are in circumstances of distress, but as those who are being justly punished for neglecting their duty.

We would say, then, in the language of an able writer, "it is a sober truth, of which every young man should feel the force, that, with the single exception of a good conscience, no possession can be so valuable as a good stock of information. Some portion of it is always coming into use; and there is hardly any kind of information which may not become useful in the course of an active life."

Our principal object in this lecture, is to call the attention of young men to some of the most important means of acquiring knowledge. These are so numerous and so various, that we shall aim to notice those only which are evidently the most useful.

The first to which we would direct attention,

is observation, or "the notice we take of all occurrences in human life, whether they are sensible or intellectual, whether relating to persons or things, to ourselves or others." * * All those things which we see, which we hear or feel, which we perceive by sense or consciousness, or which we know in a direct manner, with scarce any exercise of our reflecting faculties, or our reasoning powers, may be included under the general name of observation." This is one of the principal means of acquiring knowledge, and without it, much that would be interesting and useful will never be obtained by us.

It was said of Washington, the greatest general, statesman, and patriot the world ever saw, that he acquired the habit, when quite young, of observing closely every event of importance that transpired around him. And it was, without doubt, this habit, connected with a strong desire to obtain general information, that afterward enabled him to be so useful to his country, and to stand so high in the estimation of the American people. A distinguished writer in this country, after he had completed his education, made it a point to pursue the same course. And the information that he has acquired in this way has been of more service to him as an author than that obtained from any other single source. If in the social circle, he noticed particularly, all that was said and done, and aimed, if possible, to discover the motive that prompted the word or ac-

tion, as the case might be. When surrounded by the multitude, his attention was constantly directed to their movements, that when he left it, he might be prepared to give a correct account of all that occurred. If he traveled the highway, he observed the natural scenery around him, with all its variations, and seemed not to be satisfied while any new discovery was to be made.

This course he pursued until his mind was well stored with that varied knowledge that so distinguished him, not only as a great writer, but as a useful man.

This course we would specially recommend to all young men. The advantage of so doing is obvious. We may be gaining knowledge all the time, and every moment of our lives "may be adding something to our intellectual treasures." Notice closely the various business pursuits of life, and the probability of success in one pursuit, when compared with some other. Notice the various pursuits and professions in which men are engaged, and make yourself as familiar with the influence they have upon the morals of those who are engaged in them as you possibly can. The time may come when this kind of knowledge may be of great service to you.

Observe closely the conduct of men, and their professions or pretensions when compared with their actions. Notice the difference between the general results of vice and virtue. The immediate connection between the former and misery,

and the latter and happiness. Study minutely the philosophy of this connection, that you may see the impropriety of indulging in habits of vice, and the importance of a life of virtue.

When you see a man who has been so unfortunate as to be arraigned as a criminal at the bar of justice, discover if you can, without being too officious, the motive by which he was actuated in violating the laws of his country. On the other hand, if you find a man that is useful and influential in a community, find out if you can, the secret of his popularity, and the grounds upon which he has gained such unlimited confidence among those with whom he is associated. And thus we might go on to an extent that would be tedious. Our object is to impress the minds of the young with the importance of paying special attention to men and things, as we are satisfied that in this way he can obtain correct ideas of the philosophy of the human mind, and of the various objects and events in the vast universe around him.

"Endeavor, therefore, to derive some instruction or improvement of the mind from every thing which you see or hear, from every thing which occurs in human life, from every thing within you or without you. * * * * * Let the circumstances or situation in life be what or where they will, a man should never neglect this improvement, which may be derived from observation. Let him rove through the earth or the

seas, for his own humor as a traveler, or pursue his diversions in what part of the world he pleases, as a gentleman; let prosperous or adverse fortune call him to the most distant parts of the globe; still let him carry on his knowledge and the improvement of his mind by wise observations. In due time, by this means, he may render himself some way useful to the society of mankind."

Again, we may acquire knowledge by paying attention to what we hear, and by conversation with the wise and experienced.

It was said by a distinguished writer in England, "if you would be listened to, you must first learn to listen." This is not only true but important. An immense amount of useful information may be obtained in this way. Here again, however, young men are apt to be careless. An idea is advanced by some one in their presence that strikes their minds with peculiar force on account of its truth, its beauty, or its novelty, and should be carefully remembered by them. But how apt are they to let some trivial circumstance divert their attention at the time, and direct it to some other object, while this idea, however important, is entirely erased from their minds, and they are left as blank as if no such idea had ever been advanced in their presence. Throughout the United States, in every city, town, and village, as well as in nearly every community, young men have the opportunity of listening to lectures upon the various subjects of interest to the American

people. Politics, science, morals, and religion are regularly discussed in their hearing, and all are permitted to listen and judge for themselves. What a wide field is opened here for the acquisition of knowledge! Let every young man listen and learn, and as he learns, let him treasure it up in his mind, and soon he will be well qualified for the ordinary duties of life, and may, in due time, become a faithful advocate of those pure sentiments that are calculated to adorn the mind, and give strength to the moral powers of the man.

A great deal is to be learned also, by conversing with men of learning and experience.

"In generous conversation," said an able writer, "among ingenious and learned men, we have a great advantage of proposing our private opinions, and of bringing our own sentiments to the test, and learning in a more compendious and safer way what the world will judge of them, how mankind will receive them, what objections may be raised against them, what defects there are in our scheme, and how to correct our own mistakes; which advantages are not easy to be obtained by our own private meditations; for the pleasure we take in our own notions, and the passion of self-love, as well as the narrowness of our own views, tempt us to pass too favorable an opinion on our own schemes; whereas the variety of genius in our several associates will give happy notice how our opinions will stand in the view of mankind."

We should remember, too, that it is very pos-

sible for us, many times, to learn something from those much below ourselves. Men, sometimes, who make no pretensions to wisdom, and are comparatively unlearned, may, from their observation and experience in the things of this life, be well prepared to instruct those who, as yet, have but little knowledge of the ways of the world." A weaker man may sometimes light on truths which have escaped a wiser, and which the wiser man might make a happy use of, if he would condescend to take notice of them."

But it may not be out of place, just here, to remark, that while we listen attentively to what we hear, we should not be unmindful of the fact, that there is still a vast amount of error in the world. Falsehood is sometimes clothed in beautiful language, and set forth with a degree of earnestness that is well calculated to deceive the young and unsuspecting. Theories well calculated to mislead the mind, from the ingenuity with which they have been devised, have their warm advocates, men of fine intellectual attainments, whose only object is, to blind the minds of those that hear, that they may be able to accomplish their selfish purposes. And if we receive every thing that we hear as true, we shall be woefully imposed upon, and will often find ourselves in the dark where all should be as light as day.

Again, reading and study are means that may be successfully used in the acquisition of knowledge.

"When we read good authors, we learn the best, the most labored, and most refined sentiments, even of those wise and learned men; for they have studied hard, and have committed to writing their maturest thoughts, and the result of their long study and experience."

The people of this country are as well, if not better furnished with books, than any other people in the world. Upon every subject of importance to which our attention has been directed, books have been written. So that if we wish to investigate thoroughly any particular subject, we have the thoughts and sayings of the best writers and speakers to assist us in such investigations. What an advantage have we, in this respect, over those who lived but a few centuries before us. In a few hours now, by close attention to books, we may gain as much information, as could have been obtained a few years since, by close application to study for twelve months.

When we look at the vast amount of books scattered throughout this country, and see the sad results of ignorance among the people every where, it is truly wonderful. That is, it is wonderful to see them living in ignorance, when they might so easily enjoy the pleasures of knowledge. To account for this, and to excuse themselves, a great many are to be found who say, "we know that books, containing desirable and useful information are abundant, but we have but little time to read them. If we had the time that this one and

the other one has, we would take great pleasure in devoting much of our time to the study of books. But situated as we are, our business engagements are such that we have but little time to spend in that way."

Well, with the generality of young men in this country, this declaration is false in fact, and wrong in principle. For it may be observed, as a general thing, that when such men are free from all business engagements, they almost invariably amuse themselves in some other way than by paying attention to books. Which puts the matter beyond doubt, that the only difficulty in their way is want of inclination.

Ask that young man why he does not spend more of his time in his studies; and he will tell you that he can not spare the time. But notice him for a short time, and you will see that he has time to go to the bowling saloon, the theater, the circus; he has time for a large share of society and amusement; if friends are to meet together for a few hours of social enjoyment, he can be there without fail; in fact, he has time to gratify himself in almost every way that may be proposed, but no time to read.

Now, we ask, would it not be better for that young man to spend less of his time in the pursuit of pleasure, and more of it in the pursuit of knowledge? Would it not be better for him to be a little less rich, to have a little less of that which at most can only adorn the body and minis-

ter to his natural propensities, and more of that which enriches and adorns the nobler part of man, his intellectual faculties? We leave the reader to answer this question.

"To all our young friends, and especially to the young man just entering on the stage of life, we would say, "Read; if you have not already acquired a taste for this most delightful of all occupations, begin with the most interesting book you can find—a book of amusement, if you can not relish any thing better; then try something more solid, and so proceed until you can relish the most abstruse reasonings, or the most scientific disquisitions. Be assured, that any sacrifice of inclination you may make at first, will be amply repaid, in solid enjoyment, at last."

But now a very important point to be settled is, what books shall we read? By what rule shall we be governed in making a selection? In answering these questions correctly, there is some difficulty; for the minds of different men are differently constituted. No two are exactly alike as to fancy, desires, or aspirations. In some respects, there may be a striking resemblance, in other respects, a very broad distinction. Hence the difficulty just named. In some instances it may be best for a young man to select for himself; with others it would be well for them to get the advice of some friend who will do to rely upon, both as to his judgment and literary attainments.

Said one who had paid much attention to this

matter, "great caution, however, is required in the choice of books, for if they produce no effect on the mind, the time spent in reading them is wasted; if a bad effect, it is worse than wasted; every book should be read, therefore, with a distinct view to some good effect on the mind, or to some definite object in the business of life." We suggest that you include in your course of reading, a considerable portion of history, both sacred and profane, natural and revealed religion, the evidences of the truth of Christianity, the various branches of natural and moral science, such as natural philosophy, chemistry, and astronomy, as already noticed in another chapter, mental philosophy, the general principles of government, books that relate to your specific profession or business, that will enlarge your mental powers, that will give you correct ideas of the common principles by which human nature is actuated, and enable you to comprehend, as far as possible, the wonderful movements of nature.

Books containing immoral sentiments, low and vulgar stories designed to please men of shallow minds and impure principles, should be rejected by every gentleman, and especially every young gentleman of refined sentiments and feelings. Such books are very injurious in their influence upon the mind, and moral sensibilities of young persons. They leave a stain upon the tablet of the heart that is removed with great difficulty in after years.

Now, after we have pursued a regular course of reading, say, similar to that already pointed out in this chapter, after our minds are richly furnished with useful information, and we are well prepared to defend our principles and resist the influence of error in every shape and form, we may pay some attention to books containing sentiments that are at variance with the principles of morality, that we may be prepared to oppose their corrupting influence, and to give instruction to those whose minds are not so fully matured.

But what of novels—their utility as a means of acquiring knowledge? Our advice to young men is, pass them by altogether. And this we say, not without due reflection and a good deal of investigation. We know it is said, by those who favor the practice of reading novels, that from them we obtain some fine ideas of human nature, its imperfections, correct ideas of the faculties of the mind, of man's power to resist improper influences on the one hand, and the influence of strong temptation on the other, the effects of poverty and wealth, of vice and virtue, and such like; but we ask, is it the novelist alone, that understands the philosophy of human nature, and of the human mind? Does he alone, understand the captivating power of wealth, the results of poverty, of vice and virtue? Is it possible that we are under the necessity of pursuing the pages of fiction, where every thing is designedly enveloped in darkness and mystery, to obtain a knowledge of man's men-

tal and physical powers and of his natural disposition, and to obtain correct ideas of those pure principles by which intelligent people should be governed?

No. We have books that were written by men of learning, of diligent research, and of close observation. Compared with most of our novel writers, they are intellectual giants. Their minds have not been intoxicated by the peculiar fashions and customs of the day, and carried away into the regions of fancy and idle speculation, but they have taken a sober common sense view of things, and have set forth in a clear light, without the fictitious garb of romance, the different shades that diversify human character, the loveliness of a virtuous course of conduct, the influences that operate with such force upon the mind and feelings of men, and all those circumstances which lead to the formation of character, and shape man's course in the present state of existence. These are the books that a young man should read. These are the books from which we may obtain correct views of the physical, mental, and moral powers of man, and of those noble traits of character so much admired by the wise and virtuous.

"But are all novels to be eschewed? Are not some of them pure both in style and tendency? To this last question I reply, it is true that some novels are better than others; in themselves they may be unspotted, yet in one point they do harm;

they create a taste for fictitious reading. This taste soon acquires the intensity of a passion. The mind acquires a craving for excitement, and thus the youth, who begins by reveling among the splendid paintings of Sir Walter Scott's pen, or by subjecting himself to the quiet enchantment of Frederika Bremer's spirit, will speedily seek the works of more impassioned authors. He will hasten from Dickens to James, from James to Bulwer, from Bulwer to Ainsworth, from him to Eugene Sue, and finally he will steep his polluted mind in the abominations of that Moloch among novelists, Paul de Kock. By this time he is ready for destruction. By venturing into the pleasant ripple, he has been tempted to sport in the heaving breakers, until, caught by the resistless under-current, he is borne out to sea, and meets a premature death. How much better to have avoided the ripple! Young man, beware of reading your first novel!" *Young Man's Coun.*, page 213.

But having made a selection as to books, remember that much of your time will be lost if you do not read according to some regular plan or method; with some definite object in view. To see the importance of this fact, let us suppose that when a young man wishes to spend some time with his books, he takes up that one that is casually in his way, and reads no longer at any one time than he is prompted by his inclination. While another young man has the subject of investigation before

his mind, and the book that he intends to peruse, in his inquiries, and goes to work according to some well-digested plan. At the end of any given length of time, what a difference may be observed in the progress that they have made!

We lose much time also, by reading without having the attention fully fixed upon the subject to be investigated. Obtain, as far as possible, sufficient power over your mind to hold it to the subject and to exclude every thing that is foreign, or does not properly belong to it, and your success will be beyond your expectations. We may make a good selection as to the book, may read regularly and a great deal; but if, while we read, the mind is running from one thing to another, not connected with the subject to be investigated, we shall read to very little profit.

Remember, also, that reading alone can not make a man wise, without study. You should accustom yourself to meditation, to close thinking. Make it a point to understand whatever you see or read. We may run through a book with but little difficulty, but after we have read every page, we may know but little about its contents. It would be much better for us to read and study well a few pages, than to read the entire volume without study or due reflection.

"It is most conducive to health to let one meal digest, before we take another; it might be equally beneficial not to take up another book, perhaps not to pass to another page, till we have, by re-

flection, securely made that our own which we have just been reading. To join thinking with reading, is one of the first maxims, and one of the easiest operations. There is something to work upon; the mind has only to shape, to square, to polish it, which may be done with comparative ease."

Bear in mind, also, that a strong determination to succeed is absolutely necessary to success in this matter. In fact, hardly any thing valuable can be acquired without firmness of purpose—decision of character. Having fixed your mind on knowledge as the great and desirable end to be accomplished, let no trivial circumstance discourage you. Persevere, and resolve to conquer and overcome every difficulty.

"Perhaps you are what the world calls *poor*. What of that? Most of the men whose names are as household words were also the children of poverty. Captain Cook, the circumnavigator of the globe, was born in a mud-hut, and started in life as a cabin boy. Nelson, England's greatest admiral, was only a coxswain in his youth. Lord Eldon, who sat on the woolsack, in the British parliament, for nearly half a century, was the son of a coal merchant. Franklin, the philosopher, diplomatist, and statesman, was but a poor printer's boy, whose highest luxury, at one time, was only a penny roll, eaten in the streets of Philadelphia. Ferguson, the profound philosopher, was the son of a half-starved weaver.

Hayne, the renowned German scholiast, was born in a poor peasant's cot. Burns, the bard of Scotland, ate the coarse bread of labor. The lamented Kirk White, the youthful poet, was the son of a butcher. Whitefield, the most renowned of pulpit orators, was the son of a tavern-keeper. John Wesley, the greatest ecclesiastical legislator of his age, was the son of a poor village vicar, whose scanty income scarce sustained his numerous children. Johnson, Goldsmith, Coleridge, Keats, Crabbe, all knew the pressure of limited circumstances, yet they made themselves a name. They, with many others, have demonstrated that limited means, or poverty even, is no insuperable obstacle to success."

In using the various means to acquire general information, be not too hasty in forming your opinion. There are persons whose business it is to lay down rules, to guard the morals of the people, and to give them instruction in regard to those things which pertain to their present happiness and future well-being. But we should remember that men are fallible beings; and that, although they may be honest, they may advocate doctrines that are false, and injurious in their tendency. You should be open to conviction, but guard against error in every shape and form.

Do not allow yourself to be governed by the opinions or the example of others; but search for truth as for a hidden treasure; and having found it, make that your guide in all your undertakings,

and it will be your sure defense in every time of need.

And now, young reader, we have presented to your mind a few plain ideas upon a subject of vast importance. If we have said any thing that will prompt you to be more earnest and diligent in the pursuit of knowledge, we shall have accomplished the end we have had in view in writing the preceding pages. Bear in mind, that "knowledge is better than wealth." Wealth may enable you to make a show in the world, to attract the attention of the "giddy and the gay," and to secure the friendship of those who will be the first to forsake you if you should meet with some misfortune; but a knowledge of man, a knowledge of the world, and of the things of the world, and especially of the great plans of Jehovah, will enable us to gain a position among men, in point of true greatness, which, otherwise, we never could gain by all the wealth of the world.

LECTURE IV.

ON THE LAWS OF NATURE.

When we commenced writing this course of lectures, we had thought but little of writing a separate lecture on the laws of nature; from the fact that to enter fully into the discussion of this subject, in all its branches, would require more time than we wish to spend in the investigation of any one subject. Another reason which we may assign is, we have no inclination to engage in the discussion of any subject about which there is considerable controversy. It is well known, at least to all those who are tolerably well informed, that there is a great variety of opinions in regard to the government of the natural world. While all agree that it is governed by an All-wise Being, they differ greatly as to the method of His administration. Hence to take either view of this subject is to be considered, to a greater or less extent at least, as taking sides against all who differ with you in opinion. As no particular sect, however, as such, maintains any particular position in regard to this subject, we shall not, in setting forth our views on it, be regarded as a sectarian bigot.

While sitting and conversing with a gentleman of this place, some evenings since, the conversation took a turn which led him to speak of a

tornado which passed immediately over our little village some eight years since. It blew down nearly every tree and house in the place, destroyed a large amount of property, besides killing and wounding quite a number of persons. This gentleman alluded to various circumstances connected with, and effects produced by this tornado; and then added, that "the Supreme Ruler of the universe has nothing to do, directly, with storms, earthquakes, volcanoes, and the like; for they are the results of the regular operation of the laws of nature."

To his views on this subject, we could not subscribe, and we immediately took ground against his position. We also endeavored, by a few simple illustrations, to convince him (with what success we are not able to say) that he was wrong, and that the tendency of such a theory was to lead men to distrust the wisdom of the divine arrangements. After interchanging our views for a time, in regard to these matters, we separated. This conversation, however, suggested to our minds the propriety of writing, for the benefit of the young, the following lecture.

Our object is to set forth, in as clear a light as we can, the means by which an All-wise Being governs the world, and brings about the various events which transpire around us.

We are apprised of the fact, that to present this subject in such a light as to be understood by the young reader, would be a very difficult matter.

It is a subject "hard to be understood." We realize that it is enveloped in mystery in some of its ramifications, and doubtless will be to the end of time; as some of the principles of the divine government never will be fully understood by man in the present state of existence. But in the meantime, it stands every man in hand to know all that he can of the works and ways of Him "who rideth upon the wings of the wind," and "hath His way in the whirlwind and in the storm;" and to Whom he will finally be held accountable for all his thoughts, words, and actions.

Whatever may be thought of our opinions by others, we are fully persuaded in our own minds, that the cause of virtue and religion among men, in a practical sense at least, depends, to a considerable extent, upon the views which they entertain of the divine government. If men are so benighted as to believe that the Divine Being is merely an arbitrary ruler in his government of man and the affairs of this world, they will be naturally inclined to depart from his ways. To see the truth of the position here assumed, we have only to examine the history of those nations or people who have confused or incorrect ideas of the government of an All-wise Being, and we shall invariably find that they pay but little attention to the laws or requirements of God.

In fact, ignorance of the principles upon which the universe is upheld and its affairs controlled,

or confused ideas with respect to them, disqualifies the mind for a proper appreciation of those wise and benevolent principles, and results in dissatisfaction with the best arrangements that infinite wisdom can devise for the comfort, safety, and well-being of man. More than this; ignorance of these rules leads to practical atheism in its worst forms, to immorality, and to a general disregard for those rules and regulations that should bind man to man, and man to his Creator.

No one, we presume, who has been a close observer of the conduct of men, and the motives by which they are actuated, has failed to perceive that almost all professed infidels, when questioned closely respecting their views of the government of the universe, seem to be at a loss and have no well-defined ideas in regard to this matter, and are more inclined to deny the truth of a plain proposition, well-supported by facts, and demonstrated by positive evidence, than they are to define definitely their own views. This being true, we can not be very far wrong in saying, that the lack of a proper understanding of the operations of nature, and the immediate agency by which the affairs of this world are controlled, are sure to lower the standard of morality, and dry up the fountain of piety and virtue.

On the other hand, in the same proportion that man understands the principles of the divine government, will he discover the wisdom and goodness of God in all his plans, in reference to man

as an intelligent being, and in reference to every thing else around him; and hence, he is better prepared to see the reasonableness of the positive commands of God than he possibly could be otherwise. It is a settled point, we presume, that among those who have correct ideas of the administration of the Creator and Sustainer of all things, there is more genuine piety, more patient and willing submission to the providential dispensations of that Being, than can be found anywhere else.

It is to be regretted that some of our best speakers and most profound and logical writers, have paid so little attention to the laws, according to which the affairs of this world, and the interests of the human family, are governed. They seem not to have felt the importance of so doing, and referred to such matters only, when they casually came up before their minds, and demanded their attention.

Others, however, of the class just named, as to ability, seeing that a knowledge of the divine government is indispensable to the best interests of men, have examined every thing in their way that was calculated to throw light on this subject, and assist them in their investigations, feeling that it was important for them to do so, in view of the relation they sustained to their fellow-beings.

They have, to the utmost of their ability, endeavored to arrive at correct notions in regard to

the laws of nature, that they might, thereby, be prepared to instruct those who, for want of such views, were in darkness and ignorance, and disposed to disregard the plainest commands of the great Author of their existence.

It is very important that every individual, and especially all young persons, should investigate this subject, and learn all they can in reference to it. To this end, they should carefully examine the opinions of those who have spent so much of their time in trying to bring its principal features to view in their true light.

In doing so, you will find, as already suggested, that you can not comprehend this subject, in all its bearings, by a mere casual glance at the facts connected with it; for there are "problems of difficult solution," seeming contradictions to be reconciled, depths to be fathomed, hights to be ascended, and lengths and breadths to be surveyed, that will require a great deal of close investigation to be well understood. But you should remember that determination and perseverance will overcome the most formidable difficulties.

In attempting to write a lecture on this subject, we are conscious of our inability to do it justice; but we are disposed to run the risk of severe criticism, and make what may be justly called a weak effort, to throw some light upon this subject, if we can but get others to feel its importance, and investigate it for themselves. We hope

that the time will soon come, when all that is definitely understood in reference to the laws of nature and the arrangements of the divine Being, will be so fully illustrated and made so plain, that every student of the works of Nature may see and understand how the affairs of this world are managed.

In directing the attention of the reader to the main point under consideration, we inquire—How does the Supreme Being sustain and govern the world? By what secret agent is its affairs controlled? Or, by what secret power or influence is the vast machinery of the universe kept in motion?

To our mind, no question of more importance presents itself, except that which relates to the existence of the deity. It has been a subject of deep interest to man, in all ages of the world, wherever he has had sufficient light to see the wisdom of God as displayed in the works of creation, and his power as set forth in the operations of nature around him. It has given rise to many absurd notions and visionary theories, which have been warmly advocated by men who were bold and reckless in their assertions; and to examine their writings, it will be easily seen that they had more zeal than judgment.

They seemed never to consider the sad results which might follow the misrepresentation of a subject, the proper understanding of which leads men in the ways of pleasantness and peace. But

they are responsible for what they have said, and for the injury they may have done.

Various opinions and theories have been presented, purporting to be a satisfactory answer to the main question as stated above.

One class maintains, that after God, in the beginning, created the heavens and the earth, the sun to give light by day, the moon and stars by night—after throwing them into space in their present form, and giving them regular and harmonious movements with respect to each other, assigning to each its specific orbit—after giving the air, the waters, and each elementary principle its particular bounds, he retired to some secret part of the universe, "where, in solitude, he might enjoy the blessedness of his own infinite nature; and that he no longer troubles himself by watching the works of his own hands; but has, from that time to this, been an idle spectator of the affairs of this world, pays no attention to it, feels no concern about it, but has committed it to the rule of fate or chance.

The statement of this theory is sufficient to expose its absurdity. Its advocates have wearied themselves in vain to support it, and have finally become ashamed of a position that varies so much with the principles of sound philosophy, and are adopting sentiments more in accordance with the developments of science, sound reason, and the enlightened views of the present day.

A still larger class maintain that God is not

only the creator, and, also, the upholder and conservator of all things, and in a certain sense, controls the movements of things, but they contend that it is by the agency of the laws of nature, or, in other words, by the power which he has impressed upon matter, or that which is to be governed, and that these laws possess sufficient power to execute themselves, independent of any special act of Deity; and he, therefore, does not exercise any immediate agency in the operations of nature.

Hence, if any event of importance transpires—such, for instance, as a tornado, earthquake, or pestilence, sweeping away the habitations of men, and depopulating large communities in a short space of time—they will tell us that these things are brought about by the regular operation of the laws of nature acting out, with efficiency, the commission given to them at first by the Creator of all things, who impressed these laws with inherent power to bring about such events. How strange that this class of men should so completely overlook the fact, that law without an executive, is wholly inactive; that it must be brought to bear, as a means to accomplish any given end, by a superior power; that the laws of nature are simply the rules by which the Divine Being acts, and that his general plans are but himself in operation.

A large majority, however, of those who have

investigated this subject, maintain that the laws of nature can have no efficiency without the presence and agency of the law-giver. They, therefore, take the ground, that every event that transpires in the natural world, is the result of the direct and immediate agency of God; and that the laws of nature may be said to be, upon his part, a uniform mode of operation.

They agree with the advocates of the last-named theory in supposing the laws of nature to extend to every event, and to be in accordance with the ordination of the Deity, but they differ in maintaining that the presence and direct efficiency of a law-giver are essential to the operation of natural laws.

Now, whether the last-named theory be correct or not, the reader may judge after he has investigated this subject for himself. So far as we are concerned, we believe it to be true. For it is more in accordance with the language of inspiration on this subject, and is at variance with no fact or well-defined principle in the operations of nature. This view of this subject, brings the Deity before us as an active agent in the affairs of this world; represents him as superintending the actions and movements of men, as watching their interests, shielding them from danger, and as a sure guide to all who will "put their trust under the shadow of his wings," and submit, in all things, to his government; and at the same time, enables us

to give a reasonable explanation of natural events, which, upon any other principle, would be entirely inexplicable.

We say, that this view of the subject is in accordance with the teachings of God's Word. There are texts of Scripture that can be explained according to no other theory except the one here advocated. Take, for instance, that passage in the Book of Psalms, "Call upon me in the day of trouble and I will deliver thee." Or, another, "In all thy ways acknowledge him and he shall direct thy paths." Here, the Divine Being promises immediate deliverance to those who call upon him in times of trouble, by acts of prayer and humble reliance upon his power; and, also, promises to guide the good man individually, if he will but acknowledge him and submit to his direction.

Again, it is said, "In him we live, and move, and have our being." And, "I form light and create darkness; I make peace and create evil; I, the Lord, do all these things." Here we see that Deity, not only controls the destiny of man, but that he is actively engaged in those things which pertain to the movements of, and the changes in the natural world. Many other passages might be quoted, if it was necessary, "but these are sufficient to show that the sacred writers were fully persuaded that no event in the natural or spiritual world was to be ascribed to chance, or to

nature, or the laws of nature, as it is among men, but to the direct efficiency of God."

It is no matter of surprise, then, that men of sound judgment and penetrating minds, after investigating this subject with care and attention, have adopted the views of this subject maintained by the advocates of the last-named theory. It makes Deity the ever active agent in managing the affairs of the universe, and is the only way that we can account for many things that occur among men, and in the natural world around us.

But say the advocates of this theory, who contend that all the movements of nature are controlled by fixed laws, we do not disbelieve these passages of scripture, but we must give them a more reasonable interpretation. There are evidences, say they, that Deity does act upon some general plan in the government of man, as well as of natural things; for history and the developments of science establish the fact. But, they continue, your interpretation makes it appear that God is incessantly watching over the various events that occur, however small they may be, and that he is always exerting his power and wisdom, either in behalf of individuals or nations, or in controlling the affairs of the universe, and, that as his plans are general, these passages must be so explained, that they will correspond with his general plans.

Here we have a sad instance of bending the

Word of God, to suit a human theory. How much more reasonable is that theory, which makes "God's general plans himself in operation," and his administration divine intelligence, will, feeling, in action!

Upon this principle, we can understand all that is necessary for us to know of the government of God in the present state of existence, can interpret the scriptures without wresting them from their legitimate meaning, and are no longer under the necessity of advocating a system that is contrary to reason and common sense.

But we wish, however, to examine a little more particularly, and, if possible, show more plainly the absurdity of the doctrine, that the universe and all natural events are governed and controlled by the laws of nature, without the agency of that Being who created and sustains all things.

It seems to us, if the young reader will contemplate this subject for a short time, and bring to bear upon it the best light that he can obtain to assist him in the investigation, that he can but see that such a position, as that just stated, is at variance with the principles of sound philosophy, as well as with the teachings of the sacred writers, in referring to these matters.

Let the reader turn his attention for a moment to the vast extent of the universe, let him consider its magnitude, its well-arranged machinery, and the regularity of its motions. Let him reflect upon the size of the earthly ball that he

inhabits, and then remember, that, according to astronomical calculation, "a million of earths will scarcely equal the bulk of the sun; that all the stars are suns; and that millions of suns constitute probably, but a minute portion of that material system which God hath distributed through the immensity of space."

Let him think of the mighty power necessary to uphold this immense fabric and keep it in motion, the velocity with which some portions of this machinery is impelled, and with what precision each orb fills its mighty rounds. Let him contemplate the regularity of the earth's revolutions around the sun, and upon its own axis, the regular succession of day and night, seed time and harvest, winter and summer, and then let him ask, are all these movements controlled, and events produced by the agency of the laws of nature?

We can not conceive of any thing short of infinite intelligence and power that can produce such stupendous results. To conclude, therefore, that the affairs of the universe, and the events that transpire in the world are produced by the regular operation of the laws of nature, is to invest these laws with the attributes of Deity. Now we readily admit, that every event, in the natural world, is brought about according to fixed laws, for we believe that natural laws, as already suggested, are nothing more nor less than a uniform mode of operation upon the part of the Divine Being; but to say that these laws uphold and guide the

affairs of this world, independent of the immediate agency of God, is to endow them with that wisdom, power, and efficiency that belongs exclusively to the Supreme Ruler of the universe.

Taking this view of the subject, we shall be prepared to see the force and the appropriateness of the following remarks, viz.: "What is a natural law without the presence and energizing power of the lawgiver? How easily are men bewildered by words; and none has led more astray than this word law. We talk about its power to produce certain effects; but who can point out any inherent power of this sort which it possesses? Who can show how a law operates but through the energizing influence of the lawgiver? How unphilosophical, then, to separate a law of nature from the Deity, and to imagine him to have withdrawn from his works? For to do this would be to annihilate the law. He must be present every moment, and direct every movement of the universe, just as really as the mind of man must be in the body to produce its movements. Take away God from the universe, or let him cease to act mentally upon it, and every movement would as instantly and certainly cease as would every movement of the human frame, were the mind to be withdrawn or cease to will."—*Reli. of Geol.*, page 293.

But, says the objector, to admit that this view of the subject is correct, that is, to admit that the Deity exerts any influence, directly or indirectly,

in the production of the various events that transpire in the natural world, would lead to the belief that the circumstances thrown around man in many instances, both in an individual and national capacity, are also the result of his power and immediate agency.

We reply that the passages of Scripture already cited, and the illustrations already given, go to establish the fact, that while God is always exerting his power in upholding the universe, and controlling the movements of the sun, moon, and stars, the earth, air, and waters, he, at the same time, is guiding the affairs, and watching the interests of man. "Now spreading the impulses of his power to a wider, now restraining them to a narrower extent; now working in judgment, then in mercy, and again singularly commingling both; tempering the severity of vengeance with compassion, and guarding mercy from abuse by the majesty of righteousness; assigning longer or shorter periods to his dispensations of vengeance or goodness, as it pleases him; and thus working onward to the fulfillment of all those purposes which he has fixed in his own eternal councils as the final results of his government of human beings."—*Wat. Ser., vol. i*, page 137.

This view of the subject corresponds with the language of one of the inspired writers, "He putteth down one, and setteth up another." All going to show that our conditon in life, its comforts and blessings, depend not altogether upon

our exertions, however honest, but upon circumstances that are under the control of an All-wise Being. Take any other view of this subject that you may, or adopt any other theory than that which we here advocate, and you are bound to be at variance with the teachings of the Bible, and with the settled principles of sound philosophy, which are admitted by all who have investigated such principles.

That the young reader may not misunderstand us, and that he may be prepared to see the correctness of our conclusions on this subject, we will illustrate as follows. It is said by some learned men, that the ebbing and flowing of the tides are governed, to some extent, by the changes or movements of the moon. Now admitting this to be true (and it will serve as an illustration of other things, whether it be true or false), we ask, does the moon exert this influence upon the tides independently of any other agency or power? No, says the objector, the moon is controlled in its movements and influence by one of the laws of nature, and hence the result. But, we ask, who gives power and efficiency to this law of nature, that it is so wonderful in its operations?

Why, says the objector to our position, this law, in its operations, depends upon a second, that upon a third law, and so we might go on until the operation of the one hundredth law, in this chain, was referred to, and still we might ask, what gives efficiency to this second or one hun-

dredth law? And the correct answer would be something out of itself, and of that something, according to the theory of the objector, we know nothing.

But let us admit that the same hand that brought the moon, with every thing else, into being, gives it, by his immediate and constant agency, power to control the tides, or that the laws of nature are the rules by which the Divine Being acts, and at once the difficulty is solved upon reasonable, as well as upon scriptural grounds.

This view of the subject brings Deity before our minds as the executive of the laws which he has enacted, and as sustaining and governing the world by his own mighty power; and at the same time, as being willing to guide man in the way of holiness and happiness if he will but submit to his government. So that each individual may say, "no distance extends itself between me and God; no creature separates me from him, but is the very instrument by which he comes to me. For if there be a chain of causes and effects, he not only sustains it, but lives and acts along its whole line; and thus may we 'foresee him always before us,' 'all in all,' and all in every thing. The creature derives its whole force from God; and we and all that concerns us are 'in his hand.'"—*Wat. Ser., vol. i,* page 133.

The following incident, as given by the author just quoted, may serve to illustrate the truth of

what has just been said. "During the late struggle of the Greeks to regain their liberty, a body of Turks were, in 1824, encamped in a part of Greece, and committed every kind of excess upon the inhabitants. One of these barbarians, an officer, had pursued a Greek girl, who took refuge in the house of a widow. The widow met him at the door, and mildly attempted to dissuade him from forcing his way in to seize the girl. Enraged, he drew his saber, but when in the act of attempting to cut down the widow, it snapped in two pieces before it reached the victim. The wretch paused, but drew a pistol to accomplish his purpose in that manner, but it missed fire; and when in the act of drawing a second, he was forcibly dragged away by one of his companions, who exclaimed: "Let her alone! Do not you see that her time is not yet come?"

But we have gone as far in the discussion of this subject, as the limits of this lecture will allow, and we leave the young reader to judge for himself of what has been said. Our object, as intimated at the outset, was not to investigate this subject upon a large scale, or to bring forward all the arguments that might be urged in favor of any position we have taken; but it was to suggest a few ideas that might lead young men to investigate it for themselves, and that we might induce them to examine the writings of those authors who were much better prepared to give

them instruction in regard to these matters, than we are.

Let all young persons remember that their actions in life will correspond very much with their sentiments, let them be what they may. If you are wrong in theory, you are almost sure to be so in practice. If you adopt a theory which teaches that the affairs of this world are governed by fixed laws, and thus, in your minds, exclude the agency of the Deity from the various events that occur, you can but feel that God is at a distance from you, and you will be disposed to pay but little attention to his commands, and will not be inclined to come to him for support in the trying events of life.

While on the other hand, "it can not but deeply impress the heart, and exert a most salutary influence upon the affections, to realize that every event around us is brought about by the immediate agency of the supreme Being." Viewing the government of God in this light, we shall look to him as the author of "every good and perfect gift." And we shall feel, whether in prosperity or adversity, in the higher or lower walks of life, that if we do our duty toward God, ourselves, and our fellow-beings, that we shall be protected and guided along the journey of life, and be admitted at last where all is light and eternal joy.

LECTURE V.

ON DUTY TO PARENTS.

No FACT is more generally admitted by the American people, than that children are under special obligations to their parents, and owe them due respect and obedience. This subject is so well understood, and the duties referred to so universally recognized by all who, by proper attention to it, have made themselves familiar with it, that any violation of the principles involved in these obligations, is looked upon as being not only censurable, in no small degree, but contemptible.

If a youth, at the present period, pursues a course directly contrary to the wishes of his parents, contrary to their will as positively expressed; and it appears, at the same time, that his parents are not unreasonable in their demands, and it goes ill with him afterward in any sense of the word; if he fails in every effort to succeed well in life, and to distinguish himself in the world; if he is unfortunate in every turn, and finally overcome by peculiar calamities; he will be sadly disappointed if he expects the people of the community in which he lives to sympathize with him, or pity him in his misfortunes.

For it can be seen at a glance, by those around him, that in pursuing such a course his conduct

is the result of a deliberate determination to do wrong. They will readily perceive that he knew, and might have done better. That it was a wanton disregard of the duties that he owed to his parents, and a lack, upon his part, to appreciate the peculiar relationship existing between them and himself.

But while these facts are admitted by all, it may be said that the young men of this country generally, are deviating further from the path of duty in this, than in any other respect whatever. Young men at the present day from twelve to twenty-one years of age, (and for such our remarks are designed,) seem to have come to the conclusion that their parents are "old fogy" in their notions. That their ideas of family government and domestic economy; their views of the fashions and customs of the day, and especially of the course that should be pursued by all young persons, is decidedly wrong.

They look upon their parents as if they considered them as being behind the times. Their style of speaking and acting, out of date. They seem to be going upon the principle, that parents, as a general thing, are incapable of judging for, or instructing the young men of this generation. Hence, they have concluded, that although it was right, in former days, for young persons to obey their parents in all things lawful, it is not so now; that custom has brought about an entire revolution in these matters. And that custom has given

them the liberty to pursue a course altogether different from that pointed out by their parents.

They suppose, at an early age, that they are thoroughly posted in the great science of life, that their acquired abilities are far superior to those of their parents, that they understand the philosophy of human nature, political and domestic economy, are capable of thinking and acting for themselves, of shaping their own course in life, and that they are no longer under the necessity of going to their parents for instruction, and some of them seem to think that to do the latter would be disgraceful; would be stooping to something below the dignity of a polished gentleman.

Such young men may discover, when it will be too late, that their conclusions were wrong, and that they have been leaning too much to their own strength. Many, just at this period in their history, prepare the way for adversity and sorrow in their riper years, and have to regret, in after life, that they pursued a course, in the days of their youth, which varied so much from the wishes of their parents.

For several years past, we have noticed the conduct of young men particularly; and we are sorry to say, that there is a growing tendency among them to disregard the laws of their parents, and to follow their own inclinations. And to the serious observer, nothing can be more evident, than that a lack of judgment and experience, upon their part, will result in ruin to their

character, fortune, and all their future prospects. It may not be out of place, then, to suggest a few thoughts for their consideration, that may lead them to proper reflection upon this subject, and finally to prosperity, usefulness, and happiness.

We notice first, the reasons that should induce us to be governed by those laws which set forth our duty to our parents.

It is a matter of great importance that a young man should understand these laws, and the reasons why they should be obeyed; for a great deal more depends upon conformity thereto than we at first are apt to suppose. Your character, your standing in society, as well as the position that you wish, finally, to occupy as an honorable, high-minded, and useful citizen, all depend upon your having been trained while young, to observe and obey, strictly, the laws of your parents. If you learn to obey while young, it will be an easy matter to do so in your riper years. And if you would be respected and honored in due time, as one capable of controlling and judging, in matters of importance, to others, you must first learn to obey.

See that youth who has complied with the requisitions of this law, until it has become a pleasing task; who delights to act in conformity to the wishes of his parents; who has submitted to their rules and regulations, until it has become to him a settled habit, a matter of principle;

who, like the renowned Cyrus of old, would not take those steps by which a mighty kingdom might have been secured, without first consulting his parents, to see if it would be agreeable to their will and feelings. How easy it will be for him, in the strength of manhood, to submit, with patience and fortitude, to the laws of his country. And how natural it is for him to induce all others to do so, whenever he has the opportunity!

This being the case, he will do to rely upon as a gentleman, as a friend, and as a good citizen. His character, in all these respects, is established. He is now looked upon as a law-abiding, quiet, and peaceable man. Though he has been reared in the humble walks of life, by parents who were poor and comparatively unknown; though his literary attainments are limited, and surrounding circumstances discouraging, he is destined, in view of the course that he has pursued, to occupy at least an honorable position in society.

He may now be trusted, not only as a quiet citizen, but as a statesman. The affairs of state may, with safety, be committed to his care; for it is evident to every reflecting man, that that individual who has honored his parents in the days of his youth, and is still willing to make any sacrifice that will promote their welfare, will do all in his power to advance the interests of his country.

On the other hand, if habits of disobedience

have been indulged in by young men; if they have thrown off all restraints imposed upon them by their parents; learned to gratify their own wishes and feelings in opposition to their will, as positively expressed; disregarded their rights and lawful claims; refused to obey, as a deliberate matter, and carried it out in their actions as a matter of principle, how difficult for such persons, in future, to submit to the laws of their country, and to the rules and regulations of good society! It will be so difficult, that they can not do it with ease or comfort to themselves; so difficult is it, in fact, that we shall rarely, if ever, see a case of the kind.

By pursuing such a course, they become so self-willed, so stubborn in their dispositions, that nothing but physical or brute force can induce them to submit to law and order; and such obedience, to say the least of it, is disgraceful. And, in addition to this, as the history of such young men developes their true character, they fall, by degrees, in the estimation of those with whom they are associated, until no one will put confidence in them, be their pretensions what they may.

Said a good writer, on this subject, "if persons are undutiful to their parents, they seldom prove good to any other relation." Again, "no one will expect a return of kindness, however considerable, from him who can show himself unmindful of what he owes his parents." In view

of what has been said, we ask, can we trust him as a friend, who has refused to comply with the wishes of the best friends he has on earth, who have always been ready to minister to his wants, "who have averted the perils of infant life, and brought out a human being to the perfection of his reason, and the summit of his strength?" Can we confide in him as a gentleman, who has refused the instruction of a father, and the advice of a mother, who loved him as they did themselves? Can we have any respect for that young man who has, in the most reckless manner, trampled upon the feelings of his parents, and turned a deaf ear to their entreaties? Can the interests of a community or nation be committed to the hands of one who has proven himself to be unworthy of their confidence, unworthy, in fact, of the confidence and patronage of all men of just sentiments and feelings?

Never. His society will be avoided. To associate with him, will be looked upon as dangerous, and will really be so. And no one can feel safe while his interest is, in any way connected with his. He is viewed as one that will trample upon the rights of men, and upon every principle of justice, that he may gratify his own inclinations. Then, if you would be respected in all the relationships of life, and as one that may be trusted in perilous times; if you would occupy a respectable and desirable position in society, you must prove yourself to be worthy of such honors and

favors in the days of your youth, and your fellow-beings will always be ready to bestow them upon you.

Another reason why we should discharge the obligations that we owe to our parents is, that obedience to their laws is one of the principal safeguards against the ills of life.

It is natural for us to endeavor to avoid the evils of life, and to escape from its severe calamities, and equally so for us to desire its comforts and blessings. And that it is right for a man so to conduct himself in this life that he may be happy, and enjoy the society of his fellow-beings, no one will pretend to deny. Well, one of the principal steps to be taken by us, if we would be successful in these matters, is obedience to our parents.

It is said, in the New Testament Scriptures,* "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: For this is right. Honor thy father and mother (which is the first commandment with promise), that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest live long in the earth."

To obey, and to honor our parents, then, is a positive duty. And to obey them, is the greatest honor that we can confer upon them. It will be observed too, by merely reading this passage, that the condition upon which we live long and do well in the "earth," is, that we obey and honor

* Eph. chap. vi, v. 1–3.

our parents. It should be remembered too, that this law was enacted and set forth by a Being of infinite wisdom, who can neither deceive, nor be deceived. A being, who sustains and governs all things, and who has in his hands the destiny of all men. And if it is obeyed by us, we are sure to realize the blessing promised.

"God is not a man that he should lie," but is sure to fulfill his promises. He knows the condition of man, and all that is necessary to promote his happiness. And if we adhere strictly to the requisitions of this law in the days of our youth, and depart not from its principles in our riper years, we may confidently expect that things will be so ordered and controlled in our behalf, that we shall be secure in our possessions, tranquil amid storms and tempests, prosperous in our worldly pursuits, and may enjoy the comforts of life, the best wishes of our fellow-beings, and all that can make life agreeable and desirable.

We remark, further upon this point, that a violation of this law is sure to be followed by the infliction of a penalty that will be proportioned to the enormity of the crime committed. And whoever runs the risk of doing so, will find, by experience, that this is invariably the case. When he who enacted this law said, it shall be well with those who obey, we understand him to say, indirectly, it will go ill with him who refuses obedience. And in view of the regularity of his government in the natural, moral, and religious

world in other respects, and the certainty of the infliction of punishment upon the disobedient in every other department, we are certainly justifiable in coming to this conclusion.

It may be said that there are exceptions to this general rule, as in all similar cases. Such may be the fact, but we think it will be an exceedingly difficult matter to find an example of the kind. As to the nature of this punishment, and the time and manner in which it will be inflicted, we need not inquire particularly, for there are various ways in which an All-wise Being can punish us according to our crimes.

To see more clearly the truth of the position here assumed, let us look at the condition of those around us, whose history, in this respect, is familiar to our minds. And we shall see at every step in this investigation, that the evidence of the truth of our position will accumulate and become stronger and stronger, until its influence upon our minds will be irresistible.

Look, for instance, at that individual, who, in his boyhood, and up to mature age, stubbornly resisted the will of his parents, deliberately refused to listen to their council or instructions, who has been careless about their welfare, indifferent in regard to their feelings, and now, in their declining days, acts toward them as though they were unworthy of his attention. What, we ask, is the true history of his case up to the present time? Has he not been unfortunate in

business? Has he not, in many instances, been sadly disappointed? Has not his heart, a thousand times, been filled with sorrow, his fairest prospects blighted, and his brightest and most cherished hopes blasted? Does he not stand before the reader to-day as a monument of the displeasure of him who has said, "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right."

Of such persons no good thing can be expected. Their approach may well be dreaded, for their steps are always attended with evil, and their career with destruction to the best interests of men. In their youth, they learned to dissolve the most tender ties of nature, to burst through the restraints of law; and they now come forth prepared to trample upon the rights of men, and to crush their fondest expectations.

The history of Absalom, son of David, as recorded in second book of Samuel, may be given as a striking example of what has just been said. Absalom refused the instruction of his father, trampled upon his laws as such, and finally rebelled and set up against him as king of Israel. He, doubtless, supposed that he could best succeed in life by pursuing a course of this kind. But how sadly was he disappointed! He advanced but a few steps in his career of disobedience to his father, before he was overtaken by the just vengeance of him who had said, "honor thy father and mother, that thou mayest live long in

the earth," and is swept away from among men as a punishment for his disobedience.

Here we see the sad results of refusing to listen to the instructions of our parents, and to be governed by their laws; not only in the untimely death of the rebellious son, but in the expressions of sorrow upon the part of the father, when he exclaimed, "O, my son, Absalom! my son, my son, Absalom! would God, I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!"

Another reason to which we will briefly direct the attention of the young reader before we leave this part of the subject is, that our moral well-being, our present and future happiness, is indirectly connected with obedience to our parents.

To be happy in this world, is desired by all. This is a principle implanted in our nature by the author of our existence. Future happiness is equally as desirable to those who have proper conceptions of a future life. Enough, we think, has already been said, to satisfy any reasonable man, that happiness, in this life at least, depends greatly upon the performance of the duties that we owe to our parents.

And while obedience to the laws of our parents alone, is not sufficient to secure to us an entrance into the abodes of light and glory, as that is secured by the use of other means, things have been so disposed and linked together by our Creator, in his wise arrangements, that obedience

to our parents exerts a greater or less influence upon our future destiny. Submission to wholesome laws in our youthful days, as has already been intimated, the evil tendency of our natural feelings having been subdued by the power of reason, we now have sufficient control over the mind to direct it successfully to an investigation of those duties and wise regulations, the proper observance of which, will secure a home among the blest. Taking this view of the subject, we can readily perceive how obedience to our parents, has a bearing upon our future happiness.

If what we have said in this lecture be true, and our conclusions are correct, may we not urge young men to consider their importance? If you have ever neglected the authors of your being, or given them unnecessary pain, never rest satisfied until you have made reparation for all the injury, in this respect, that you have ever done them; and while they live, show them that kindness that is due the parent from the child, and there is positive assurance that you will be prosperous and happy through life.

We notice, in the next place, in what the duty to our parents consists, and how it is to be performed.

In reference to obedience, as an important part of this duty, we have already spoken at length. As much so at least as our purpose, in regard to the length of this lecture, will permit.

This duty includes respect for our parents. And this too, not only while we are young and imme-

diately under their control as children, but as long as they are permitted by our Creator to remain with us in the world. Now we do not include in our remarks here, parents, who, by their habits of vice, indecent conduct, general disregard of all moral restraints, and by engaging in low pursuits and dishonorable callings, have rendered themselves unworthy of decent attention.

But taking it for granted that the reader has not been so unfortunate as to be reared in such a nursery, we remark, that our parents should be treated by us with due respect, whatever may be their condition in life, or however widely we may differ with them in our political or religious opinions. We should respect their opinions, wishes, and feelings; bear with their infirmities and imperfections, and have too high a regard for them to speak of their faults to others, or to do any thing that would be painful or disagreeable to them, or render them the least uncomfortable in their declining days.

Says Smith, an able writer on this subject, "Every man has little infirmities of temper and disposition which require forgiveness; peculiarities which should be managed; prejudices which should be avoided; innocent habits which should be indulged; fixed opinions which should be treated with respect; particular feelings which should be consulted. All this may be done without the slightest violation of truth, or the most trifling infringement of religion; these are the sacrifices

which repay a man in the decline of his life, for all that he has sacrificed in the commencement of years; this makes a parent delight in his children, and repose on them when his mind and his body are perishing, and he is hastening on to the end of all things."—*Ser.*, page 69.

Children at the present day, however, seem, in many instances, to overlook the fact, that they are under special obligations to respect their parents. See that gentleman that lives in yonder palace, with all the comforts and conveniences of life around him. He, with his family, are refined in their manners, understand the rules of fashionable society, and are getting along according to the finest style of the day. His parents are poor, but honorable. They labored hard and honestly to educate, and to give him a successful start in life, and hence his present condition. And now in the decline of life, they come to spend with him a portion of their time. Expecting, in return for their kindness to him, respect and attention, but discover, to their astonishment, that as they are old-fashioned and a little peculiar in their habits that he is ashamed of them. That he treats them disrespectfully, and would be glad, from his conduct toward them, to be clear of them altogether.

And is this true of Americans? Can examples of this kind be found among the enlightened and refined citizens of our happy country? We have witnessed a few instances of the kind, and are satisfied that nothing can be more painful to pa-

rents, or more unjust in the estimation of all good men. It is to be hoped that the young men of the present generation, in view of their superior advantages as to light and knowledge, will learn better things.

Again, this duty includes proper care and attention to the temporal wants of our parents.

On this proposition but little need be said, for it is well understood and readily admitted by all. Any man in the present improved state of society, with the peculiar influences of the present period acting upon his mind, that would refuse to minister to the wants of his parents; who would not upon all occasions, do all that his circumstances would permit to render them comfortable, and thereby smooth their path "as they hasten on to the end of all things," deserves the reproach of his fellow-beings, and is sure, sooner or later, to meet with the rebuke that his conduct so justly deserves.

We envy not the position of that man who would suffer his parents to perish by want, while it is in his power to sustain them; or who would refuse to shield them from danger, or protect them from the insult and abuse of those who possess none of the finer feelings and sentiments.

But it is needless, we hope, to urge this point upon the minds of the young men of this country, for it can not be reasonably expected that any of them will be so void of natural feelings and correct views upon this subject, that they would run

the risk, in an age like this, of refusing to comfort those who have comforted them, and guided their feet in their infancy and childhood, and watched over and protected them until they were capable of protecting themselves.

Finally, on this point, this duty consists in honoring our parents.

On this point, the author already quoted is so clear and forcible in his remarks, that we prefer giving our readers his ideas in place of our own. Says he, "This commandment to honor parents may, in fact, be rendered subservient to every virtue, and may be obeyed as the means of enforcing every law of the Gospel; honor your father and your mother; honor them with your lives, by your spotless integrity, by keeping yourself void of offense toward God and man. If revenge prompts you to break through human laws, and makes you prodigal of life, forgive for the love of your parents; rouse yourself, that the praise which men bestow upon you, may warm the hearts of your parents. Whenever you are about to do any thing that is wrong, remember there is a father and a mother whose hearts you will tear with anguish; have pity upon them, and bear them in mind in all you do; if you are dishonorable they can not be honored; if you are in wretchedness, they can not rejoice; they will burn with your glory; they will blush with your shame; they have smiled upon your cradle, they will weep o'er your tomb." *Ser.*, page 71.

No young man of thought and proper reflection, and especially of observation, will for a moment doubt the correctness of the sentiments here set forth. And surely if he believes them to be such as should be practically carried out, he will not hesitate to do so. It should ever be remembered that in the performance of this duty, we are obeying one of the positive commands of the Divine Being, performing an act of religion that shall by no means lose its reward.

Before we close our remarks on this subject, it may not be improper for us to notice, in few words, some of the difficulties in the way of those whose duty it is to obey and honor their parents.

In the performance of this, as well as in the performance of all other duties, we shall find various obstacles to overcome. One obstacle that we will mention, as deserving special attention, is a liability, upon our part, to forget our obligations to our parents. This, at first, may seem a little unreasonable, as it may be supposed that there can be no danger on this score, but it is none the less true notwithstanding. We are prone to neglect our duty in all respects; and it is not unreasonable to suppose that we will, at times, lack promptness in the performance of this.

Our attention is earnestly directed to our own interests and the interests of our own families. Our chief delight is in seeing our families prospering and doing well in the world. We delight to see them occupying a position that is honorable,

and that will secure to them the respect and confidence of the better classes of society; and it is natural for us to exert all our energies of body and mind to place them in that condition.

But while such a course is truly commendable, it being proper and right that we should do so, how apt are we to "forget the days of weakness, and the nursing father and the nursing mother of the times that are gone," and leave them to suffer for the common conveniences of life, and to go down in sorrow to their graves!

Another difficulty that we will mention, as being in the way of some (and we are glad to say but few), is, that they do not realize that they are under special obligations to their parents.

They take the ground, that the kindness that parents manifest toward their children, is the result of those feelings that are natural to parents whether they live in a heathen or a civilized land. But they should remember that to "deny the obligations which they owe to parents, because it is common in all parents to do good to their children, is to withhold the reward which principally makes that kindness so common."

A young man, at the present period, with all the influences of refined society operating upon his mind, who will deny that he is under special obligations to respect and reverence his parents, and to provide also for their temporal wants, is unworthy of confidence, and should be shunned by all who have learned and practice better things.

Other obstacles to a right performance of this duty might be mentioned here, but enough has been said to bring this part of the subject before the reader's mind, and we leave it with him, trusting that he will reflect seriously upon what has been said, and weigh it candidly; and that he will act wisely toward his parents, toward his fellow-beings, and above all, toward his Creator.

We close this lecture in the language of L. M. Stretch, on "The Character of the Good Son." Said he—"The good and dutiful son is one who honors his parents by paying them the utmost deference and respect, by a reverential awe and veneration for them, a filial affection for their persons, and a tender regard for their safety and preservation, a constant and cheerful attention to their advice, and a ready and implicit obedience to their commands. As he becomes every day more sensible of his obligations to them, he grows every day more willing and solicitous to repay them. He supplies his youth to support their age; his abundance to relieve their wants; his knowledge and strength to supply their infirmities and decay. He is more careful of his character and reputation in the world, because theirs depend upon it. Ever anxious for their welfare, and attentive to their happiness, he endeavors, by every motive in his power, to prolong *their days*, that *his own* may be long in the land. He rests assured that God will not only bless obedient children here, but will reward them with the blessings

of heaven, where it shall be *well with him* for ever: where we all shall join—son and father, daughter and mother, wife and husband, servant and master, all relations and connections of this life, to honor one great Parent, Protector, Lord, and Master of us all."—*Beau. His.*, page 28.

LECTURE VI.

ON PATRIOTISM

But few writers of late years, who have attracted much attention by their ability, have passed this subject unnoticed; and there is scarcely any speaker of much distinction but what has directed the attention of his hearers to this subject, and urged its claims upon their minds with more or less earnestness, as the circumstances in their case seemed to demand. The consequence is, we can hardly find an individual of ordinary capacity and information in our country, but who seems, when the subject of pariotism is mentioned, to have at least a general idea of what is meant.

The true patriot has been universally admired, in all ages of the world, by all who were capable of estimating properly the conduct of the man, who, from disinterested motives, has done all that he could to maintain the rights, and promote and defend the honor and happiness of his country. In so many ways, and under so many circumstances, has this subject been brought before the people of this country, and its principles, when contrasted with selfishness and narrow-mindedness, are so lovely and sublime, that we do not

wonder that they should be admired, really by many, and professedly by all.

As so much has been said of patriotism by our most able writers and speakers, it would be vain in us to attempt to say any thing in regard to it that would be novel in its character, and we shall make no such attempt. Our aim is, not to go into a full illustration of the principles of patriotism, or to prove that it is one of the most noble passions that ever warmed and animated the human breast, for this would be a useless undertaking, as all who take a comprehensive view of things are already satisfied. But the main object which we have in view, is to say something that will impress the minds of the young men of this country with the necessity of imbibing the principles of patriotism in their youthful days, and of acting upon these principles in all their movements, both in respect to society and the world generally.

It is a fact that should not be overlooked by the American people, that this subject, though universally admitted to be of vast importance, is too much neglected at the present day. While it is alluded to in glowing terms by this speaker, and pictured in fine style by that writer, its importance, at least in a practical point of view, seems not to be felt by the generality of the people.

But a few years since, the necessity of pure patriotic sentiments and feelings, in the minds of the people, seemed to be realized as a general

thing; so much so, that parents and guardians, as well as teachers, both public and private, made it a point to impress these sentiments fully upon the minds of those under their care. And the beneficial results of their noble efforts may be seen throughout our land and nation in almost every department of society. And we might well suppose, that a system that was productive of so much good, and so many happy influences, would never be entirely neglected. Yet, strange and unreasonable as it may appear, but little attention is paid to the means of keeping alive those noble sentiments and feelings that are so well calculated to give life and energy to the public and private interests of our country.

It may be said that this is an age of improvement, and it may be admitted as being true in some things, but it is not true in all. We are disposed to doubt that this is an age of improvement in morals and in those noble and patriotic sentiments, by which an enlightened and highly-favored people should be governed. Making money, at the present day, seems, with most persons, to be "all the go." If parents and guardians can learn those committed to their care, to be "sharp in trading," to secure a fortune, to keep up with the fashions and customs of the day, they are satisfied. They seem not to feel the importance of teaching them, in their youthful days, to cherish those sentiments and feelings which would lead them, in future, to

regard, correctly, the rights of others, and to have a proper interest for the welfare of their country.

The American people should ever remember, and, especially, let it be engraven upon the minds of the young, that their present prosperity, wealth and influence; that their position in point of respectability and greatness, when compared with other nations, are all the results of the patriotic efforts made by our fathers, who had been taught to labor, not only for their own interest, but for the welfare of others. And they should bear in mind, also, that our existence as a free, independent, and prosperous people, the perpetuity of our laws and institutions, our civil and religious privileges, all depend, so far as man's agency is concerned, upon the patriotism of those who hold the destiny of this nation in their hands.

There is an idea that prevails to a considerable extent, at the present day, in the minds of quite a number of gentlemen, men, too, of some distinction, on account of their sobriety and common sense, that is false and dangerous in its tendency, and that is, that since the days of Washington and his compatriots, who signed the Declaration of Independence, fought the battles of the revolution, framed the constitution of our country, stood up and manfully contended for their rights in perilous times, and thus opened the way for their descendants to march on to prosperity and greatness, that the true spirit of patriotism has died away among the people; and that now it

is difficult, if not impossible, to find a genuine patriot, in feeling and practice, in all the land.

It is much to be regretted, that the affairs pertaining to the welfare of this country have been so badly managed, that such an idea as that just named, can find a place in the minds of true-hearted American citizens, and especially in the minds of the young men of this country. But however false this idea may be, and it is certainly false, it is very difficult to induce some men to believe the contrary. Many of them, too, are men of sterling worth, and might be of great service to their country, if this erroneous notion could be banished from their minds.

"The consequence of this tone of feeling is, that whole classes of men, in a greater or less degree, seek the place of retreat. Some abandon the caucus, convention, and committee room, as no place for them; but retain the poor privileges of expressing themselves implicitly in defense of the party in which they are embodied, and the candidates whom they find imposed upon them by the managers to whom they have given the reins." The principal cause of this error is a failure, upon the part of those who have adopted this mistaken view of this subject, to distinguish the genuine patriot from the hypocritical pretender.

In every large community there is a set of men to be found, who have lost fortune and fame in the various whirlpools of pleasure. They are

bad men at heart, and really have no regard for the welfare of their fellow-beings. They are willing, in view of poverty and present distress, to become the tool of any political party, or engage in any enterprise whatever, if they can thereby assume the garb of patriotism, deceive the people, and secure their confidence; while their real object is to "prey upon industry," tear down the decencies of society, and gratify their own covetous desires and vitiated appetites.

Well, after honest-hearted, straight-forward men have been deceived a few times by these hollow-hearted wretches, and see the result of their false pretenses, they suffer themselves, if not very much on their guard, to become disgusted with the name of patriotism, politics, institutions for the poor, or any general system of improvement, either as to the minds or morals of the people. Hence it is that honest men, genuine patriots, who think, plan, invent, and act for the public good, by day and by night, actuated by the purest motives, present their petitions to such men, in behalf of this measure or that institution, in vain. Their petition is rejected, not from the fact that their cause is not good, but because those upon whom they call have been deceived by those, who, heretofore, have presented themselves, on the same errand, under false colors.

Now, we would say to such persons, while you guard against imposition upon the one hand, you should not be so cautious, on the other, as not

to do your duty. We should ever be willing to sanction and support measures that are calculated to do good. And we should be willing to join with those who are exerting themselves, to the utmost of their ability, to secure and maintain the best interests of our country. For he who would refuse to give his influence and support to any measure which has for its object the welfare of society, is but little better than those who bend every thing to suit their own convenience, irrespective of the rights of others.

For although it may be true that a majority of the citizens of this country do not feel as deeply concerned in her welfare as they should, and however well satisfied we may be, that there are many who would sacrifice her interests at any time to gratify their own selfish purposes, it is also true that there are, in every community, men who are willing to sacrifice their individual interests and comforts, and risk their fortunes, and even their lives, in the service of their country. Propose to them any plan or method for the public good, whether it relates immediately to their community or nation, and you will always find them in readiness to join you. They have hearts to feel, and their influence and means, if need be, are immediately brought to bear in behalf of that movement or plan, that it may be carried forward successfully, and accomplish the desired end.

When such men are called by their country to her legislative halls, to assist in arranging the

affairs of government, they are ready to obey the summons. If our country's rights are invaded by a foreign foe, they are the first to gird on the armor, and may be found in the thickest of the battle, exerting themselves with a degree of skill and ability, that would have been creditable to the most renowned generals of ancient or modern times. These things being true, and no one of observation in these matters can doubt the truth of them, we need not be told that the spirit of patriotism no longer exists in our country. True patriots may be found throughout our land and nation.

It is highly important that young men should have a correct idea of patriotism, or rather of the character of the true patriot. To be mistaken here, may, in many instances, lead to a wrong course of conduct through life.

Patriotism, as defined by our standard authors, is love of our country, or devotion to the welfare of the community or nation. Most writers of distinction upon this subject, use the term patriotism, as being synonomous with love of our country.

Now it may be said, in one sense, that all men love their country, who possess those feelings which are natural to the human family. "The most friendless of human beings has a country which he admires and extols, and which he would, in some circumstances, prefer to all others under heaven. Tempt him with the fairest face of na-

ture, place him by living waters, under shadowy cedars of Lebanon, open to his view all the gorgeous allurements of the climates of the sun, he will love the rocks and deserts of his childhood better than all these." We say it is natural for men to entertain feelings such as are here described, to a greater or less extent; but while patriotism includes this natural love of our country, a man may be in possession of it, and still come far short of being a true patriot.

We may remark further, just here, that patriotism, as is often set forth and advocated by some, is a low and selfish principle, a principle wholly unworthy of that enlightened and expansive view of that subject which should be entertained by all who wish to be of any service to their country. The true patriot, while he feels, in common with other men, a deep interest for the welfare of his own family and immediate neighborhood, looks attentively, also, to the welfare of his country.

He is so much interested in her institutions and immunities, and has such strong desires to see her in a prosperous and healthy condition in a political, intellectual, social, and moral point of view, that he can not allow himself to be idle for a moment while he can do any thing calculated to bring about this state of things. And while he labors from day to day, and from year to year, for the accomplishment of these ends, drudgery itself seems almost to be beautiful, and suffering to be a delightful task, while he feels that he is in his

country's service. Some of this class of persons pursue this course, until they feel, at last, that any wrong done to their country is a personal wrong, and on the other hand, every wrong committed by their country, is looked upon as a sin for which they are personally responsible.

Such men are always foremost in inventing and carrying out plans for an improvement in the distribution of justice, in the political constitution of the State, in extending and carrying forward educational interests, and in doing any thing that will improve the moral and social condition of the people. Let us contemplate the character of the true patriot by way of contrast, that we may obtain a more forcible idea of its peculiarities. A true patriot is always opposed, in feeling, to that which is low and selfish in its character, and seeks no advantage of others in any capacity whatever. His motto is something like this: "We should perform those duties which may affect the country at large, with the same inflexible justice which we would exhibit on ordinary occasions, for we are as accountable to our Creator in every public, as we are in every private transaction."

Compare such an one to the unfeeling and selfish demagogue, to whom reference has already been made, and see how they differ in their sentiments and feelings, in the motives by which they are actuated, and in their entire course of conduct, whether public or private. The latter seems hardly ever to think of any thing save his

own immediate interest. It matters not what measure he may adopt, or in what enterprise he may engage; it matters not how loudly he may talk of his devotion to the institutions of his country, or how much he may be praised by those who have been deceived by his pretensions; the real object in view, in every movement that he makes, is to gratify his own desires, and secure his own welfare, though it be at the expense of the public good.

His patriotism, his morality, his religion, his philanthropy, if he pretends to be in possession of any of these things, is nothing more nor less than downright hypocrisy. If he is not guilty of crime in its worst form against individuals, it is from the fact that he knows the loss of reputation would be the loss of his own interest. He will engage in any thing that is profitable, however base it may be, however injurious to society and to the best interests of the community, if he thinks he can do so without being detected in his meanness.

If he lived in worse times, when the standard of morals was still lower, "he would defraud his neighbors, he would forfeit his word," he would even go so far as to pull down the strongholds of virtue and morality, lay waste the fairest prospects of his country, if he could make such a course profitable to himself, and subservient to his purposes. Many such men are to be found in the land; and we have drawn this pic-

ture of their character, that young men may be prepared to guard against their influence. For such men soon contract the habit of speaking in the warmest terms of compassion of those with whom they are associated, and are well calculated, by their assumed good manners and false pretensions, to deceive and mislead the young and unsuspecting.

If a young man wishes to take a high and honorable stand in society, and to be respected as a patriotic, enlightened citizen of this country, let him carefully shun the company of the despicable wretch just referred to, and avoid a similar course of conduct as he would the most deadly poison. And let him follow the example of that man whose heart, life, energies, fortune, and all are consecrated to the service of his country; and who is willing to make any sacrifice whatever, of ease, interest, or comfort, if he can feel that in so doing, he is benefiting his country. Every young man should study the principles of patriotism, until they become perfectly familiar to his mind, and should learn to practice those principles in the days of his youth. He should grow up a lover of his country, her laws and institutions, and of every thing that gives life and energy to her movements.

His country has a right to expect such things at his hands. Others have watched and guarded these laws and institutions, in the true spirit of genuine patriotism, that have given him position

in the world, intellectual and moral standing in society, with all the blessings and endearments of civilized life; and he, in turn, should feel himself under the strongest obligations to uphold and protect those laws; that others, in due time, may realize their influence, and the benefits which they confer.

It should be borne in mind by the young men of this country, that those who hold the reins of government and guide the affairs of State, and who are using their talents and influence and exerting all their energies to perpetuate our civil and religious privileges, who are trying to build up and sustain moral and educational institutions, and, in a word, endeavoring to make every thing subservient to the welfare of our country, will soon pass away to the silence of the grave. Their voices will be silent in death, and no more be lifted up in defense of our country's rights. No longer will they plead in behalf of this or that noble enterprise, or warn the people of impending danger, but in all these respects, the young men will have to take their place.

Oh! how important that they should consider their responsibility, and be well prepared to act their part in a manner that will be creditable to themselves and to their country!

In a short time, those who are now young, will be called to fill the various offices of State; some to the senate chamber, others to legislate. This one to that department of State, that one to an-

other. And of all, wisdom, honesty, and integrity will be expected. The country will look to them for protection, for her interests will be confided to their care. And her institutions will be, more or less, under their control. If they are properly managed by them, they will prove a blessing to all concerned. But if there is a lack of firmness, moral courage, and patriotic sentiments and feelings, or if there is a want of skill and ability, the country in the same proportion, must suffer. Her proud and lofty pillars will give way. Her domes and spires will fall to the dust, and every feature of her greatness will disappear. And the fond hopes now entertained by the American people, will be buried in despair.

At the thought of such a state of things, let the young men of this happy republic arouse themselves, "and put on their strength." Remember that you are now a free people, that you have good laws, a pure religion, that this country has nourished great men, and is capable of noble deeds. Never let her greatness diminish, or her glory fade away, for want of zeal upon your part, while engaged in her service.

From some indications at present, it may not be out of place to remark here, that the time may not be very distant when every true patriot will be called upon to show his hand. And to be widely awake to schemes devised, and plans being laid, by those who are not as friendly to the institutions of our country as they should be, and as

they would be, if they were capable of appreciating any thing noble and elevating in its character. There are certain movements being made, and influences brought to bear, that are agitating the minds of the people, from one end of this country to the other. These movements and influences must be checked in due time, or they will affect alike the political, social, and moral destiny of this entire nation. In fact, we may already, to some extent, see their effects.

Look at the condition of our country in a political point of view. See how much excitement prevails in all classes of society from the highest to the lowest. We see the North and the South arrayed against each other, as though the interest of one division was as different from that of the other as day is from night. They act toward each other as though the rights of each had been trampled in the dust by the other. And seem to feel, as though the welfare of one depends entirely upon the downfall of the other.

In the North and South we see political parties arrayed against each other, and manifesting a bitterness, a hatred, and an uncompromising opposition that would have been censured in worse times, and is disgraceful in a civilized country. It is so of late that to belong to one party, is to be a dishonest man, a traitor to his country, and unworthy of confidence in the estimation of every other party. One can not look upon the movements of the other with any degree of allowance.

For they are all in the wrong direction, injurious in their tendency, and calculated to ruin the country.

No matter how honest the leaders of this party may be, or how pure the motives by which they are actuated; they may love their country and entertain strong desires for her prosperity, and yet another party professes to be shocked at the evidences of corruption, as manifested by all its members. What is to be the end of these things we pretend not to divine; but leave the future to make the development. May he who controls the universe overrule the evil intentions of men, and save our country from political ruin.

When we look at the condition of our country in a social point of view, we shall see, that in this respect, we have occasion to be on our guard. There is a class of men among us, whose sole object seems to be, to mar the beauty, and destroy every lovely feature of refined society, and would, if possible, destroy the basis on which the edifice of social life is placed. They seem to despise the rules and regulations of good society, and, instead of doing all they can to preserve social order, they would burst asunder all social ties, lay waste the heritage of the social compact, would bring decency and refinement on a level with debauchery and infamy; and thus destroy the only safeguards of virtue and happiness. Should not every true patriot, every lover of his country rise up in the majesty of his strength to

oppose and destroy the influence of those who would dare invade the precincts of refinement, or prostrate virtuous innocency.

We might here direct the attention of young men at some length, to the condition of our country in a moral point of view, if time and space would permit. It is only necessary, however, for them to look abroad in the land, to perceive that there is a growing tendency among the people everywhere, to indulge in all the common vices of the day. Such, for instance, as Sabbath-breaking, swearing, lying, defrauding, and a host of other crimes, if possible, worse than those already named. But we leave the reader to finish the picture.

Now, to guard successfully against all the evils we have just named, will require the watchful courage and sound judgment of every true patriot, whether young or old, throughout this entire country. And shall not the young men prepare themselves to take an active part in driving these evils from the land, that the genius of our laws, a wise policy, social order, and a correct standard of sound morals, may be sustained among the people? They surely will contribute their mite of influence, as well as their talents, and a portion of their wealth, if they possess it, when they see and feel its importance to themselves and others.

But they should remember, that to engage successfully in the service of their country, they

must not be too hasty, or sanguine of success. For, however honest may be their intentions, or just the cause in which they are engaged, their plans will not always succeed, nor will they have the ability and skill to accomplish as much as they may have anticipated. Some young men, after they become a little skillful in business transactions, "and acquire some degree of consideration in the little circle in which they live, and taste, for the first time, the sweets of distinction and praise," conceive the idea that they are men of considerable importance to their country; and that her welfare depends, in no small degree, upon the efforts which they are to make, to secure her happiness and prosperity. They suppose themselves to be superior to all others as to intellectual endowments, sound judgment, and skill in the affairs of government; and that they have all the elements and qualifications of great men. Hence, they fancy to themselves that the multitude will be roused to immediate action by the powers of their eloquence; that the wise will sanction their movements, and at once imagine themselves to be orators, statesmen, or any thing that their country needs to carry forward her interests.

Such young men will be very apt to meet with disappointment. They will soon discover that there are others who have better judgment, more skill and ingenuity to plan for the good of society, and more ability to execute those plans than themselves. They will find, too, that after they

have made their greatest efforts, that there are others who can better control the minds and feelings of the people.

But let us remember also, that if we possess but one talent, we are responsible for one only; and we should be willing to use it to the best advantage, though we do but little compared with what is done by others. "It is natural for every man to wish for distinction; and the praise of those who can confer honor by their praise, in spite of all false philosophy, is sweet to every human heart. But, as eminence can be the lot of but few, patience of obscurity is a duty which we owe not more to our happiness than to the quiet of the world at large. Give freedom, if you are young and ambitious, to that spirit which throbs within you; measure yourself with your equals; and learn from frequent competition, the place which Nature has allotted to you; make of it no mean battle, but strive hard; strengthen your soul to the search of truth, and follow that specter of excellence which beckons you on beyond the walls of the world to something better than man has yet done. It may be, you shall burst out into light and glory at the last; but if frequent failures convince you of that mediocrity of nature which is incompatible with great actions, submit wisely and cheerfully to your lot. *Smith's ser.*, page 96.

Another difficulty with which the young man may meet, which may be a considerable draw-

back upon his energies, is, that the people will not always properly appreciate his motives, nor correctly estimate his real worth.

Many a genuine bill has been refused by the banker or broker, from the fact that there were counterfeit bills in circulation. And the genuine patriot, while he labors to the best of his ability in behalf of his country, will find that there are some, who, from the misconduct of others, will always be ready to suspect his motives, oppose his designs, and bring him into disrepute before the public. But considerations of this kind should never paralyze the energies or check the zeal of the genuine patriot. It has always been the case, and will be as long as error and vice are to be contended with in the world.

Let all your actions demonstrate the honesty of your intentions. Show by your conduct that you have the good of your country at heart, and you will soon be able to rise above the low and vulgar prejudices of those who are always blind to their own interest, and will be able to show to the world that you have been actuated, in every step that you have taken, by the principles of true patriotism.

We should ever bear in mind that patriotism does not consist alone in the performance of noble deeds, or in the execution of wise measures; but that much may be done in the cause of truth, virtue, morality and religion by the example of those who feel interested in these matters. Every man

has more or less influence over the minds of those with whom he is associated. And we are just as responsible for the influence of our example, as we are for any other talent that we may possess. We are under obligations, then, to guard not only against evil, but against the appearance of evil, if we would be successful in our attempts to benefit the community in which we live.

"It is not enough to ascertain that our actions are innocent as to ourselves, but they must be innocent as to the effect they produce upon others; the consequences of some levity or omission to you may be unimportant; but they are not unimportant to those who are guilty of the same thing, because you are, and will be guilty of it with far other talents, other habits, and other dispositions than yourself."—*Ibid.*

And now, in conclusion, we would say, let every young man be up and doing. There is something for all to do. Enough to engage the hearts and hands of all who love the country in which they have lived from their childhood, and the laws and institutions that have guided and protected them to the present time. The age in which we live, the relations that we sustain to each other and to mankind demand it at our hands. If we faithfully discharge the duties that we owe to our country, much good may be done by us; but if we fail to do so, our own hearts and the hearts of others may be filled with sorrow, and our habitations with mourning, as we hasten to the silence

of the grave. Our prayer is, that the young men, in this land of schools, churches and bibles, may be properly instructed, that our country may still flourish, and that virtuous and noble sentiments may still control the minds of the people.

LECTURE VII.

ON INTEMPERANCE.

We call the attention of young men to the subject of intemperance, not because of its novelty, not because we suppose them to be ignorant of a vice that is so common in almost every community, but because it is destructive in its tendency to the best interests of mankind. It is so in an intellectual, physical, social, moral, and religious point of view; and is directly calculated to ruin the character, fortune, and the temporal and spiritual prospects of all who indulge in it.

All serious observers have seen, heard, and read enough in the last few years, to satisfy their minds that intemperance is doing more real injury to society, in this country, than any other evil with which it is afflicted. You may look in vain for an evil that is more general, and for one that more certainly destroys the happiness of man. Everywhere you go, you may witness its sad results. Here you may see, in ruins, an intellect that once entertained lofty conceptions of Deity and his works, was capable of contemplating the beauty and sublimity of nature, and of delighting in that which is moral and elevating in its char-

acter. There, you see a human being, diseased, loathsome, ruined, who was once admired because of his beauty, symmetry of form, and true manliness. Look again, and you will behold debauchery, infamy, and wretchedness, where purity, prosperity, and happiness once prevailed.

And what is most to be regretted, this tide of ruin still rolls on, with unabated fury, to the present day, while efforts, one after another, have been made to dry up the fountain from which it flows. It is now laying waste the habitations of men, destroying the beauty of nature in its loveliness, pulling down the strongholds of virtue and morality, and, if not checked in its course, will carry thousands to eternal destruction.

There are young men, in almost every community, who have studied or are now studying the learned professions, practicing with skill and ingenuity some mechanical art, studying the laws and policy of the country with an eye to becoming statesmen, engaged in mercantile pursuits, or learning, under some experienced hand, how to till the soil — that noblest of all pursuits — who, from the fact that they are indulging in habits of intemperance, will, in less than ten years from this time, be confirmed drunkards. They will disgrace their profession, ruin their trade, fill the hearts of their parents and friends with sorrow and mourning, and then make their way, with rapid steps, down to the drunkard's grave.

It is enough to pain the heart of the true pa-

triot, when he contemplates the condition of many of the young men of this country; especially when he sees that they are well educated, have fine natural sense, are generous and noble-hearted, full of life and animation—when he sees that they are capable of noble deeds, might, if they would, stand high in the scale of intellectual greatness, occupy a prominent position among the most celebrated statesmen, poets, and orators of the day, and then reflects that they are yielding to the influence of a vice that has already ruined so many, and brought them to an untimely death. That instead of pursuing the course they should, instead of trying to elevate themselves in the estimation of all good men, and of doing something for their country worthy of the age in which they live, they are throwing their influence in favor of that monster evil, intemperance — using strong drink as a beverage, engaging in the traffic of the same, and are ready to sanction any movement by which it may be placed in the reach of all who may have the inclination to use the poisonous stuff.

What a pity that young men, surrounded with circumstances so favorable, enjoying the confidence of their friends, and standing high in society, should ever indulge a habit that so universally paralyzes the energies of the most uncompromising! That so certainly undermines the vital powers of the system, degrades man in his own estimation, and in the estimation of others, destroys fortune and fame, and all the

pleasures of this life, and finally carries soul and body into the regions of interminable woe and misery; for, it should be remembered, that the results of intemperance cease not when man's present existence ceases, but will follow him to the land of spirits. For it is said, in the volume of inspiration, that "drunkards," as well as other evil doers, "shall have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone."

It affords us great pleasure, however, when we reflect, that the people of this country, and also of Europe, France, and Ireland, as well as in various other civilized countries, have turned their attention to the evil consequences of using intoxicating liquors as a beverage; and that they have done so much to check its influence. This subject has been thoroughly canvassed by many of the greatest men of the age. The evil tendencies of intemperance, after having been closely investigated, have been clearly set forth, and fully demonstrated.

Philosophers, moralists, physicians, and thousands who are engaged in the learned professions, as well as ministers and people, have, after mature deliberation, decided that intemperance, in its influence and tendency, is evil, "and only evil, and that continually." In fact, inebriates themselves, and even the worst class of men that you can find, will acknowledge the correctness of the decision just mentioned. And there are hundreds and thousands of the young men of this country,

who most heartily sanction the truth of this decision.

As evidence of the fact, many of them have taken an active part in the cause of temperance, and have manifested a willingness to do all in their power to drive the monster, intemperance, from the land. One of the most powerful temperance lectures that we remember ever having heard, was delivered by a young man not more than seventeen or eighteen years of age. He was then a student of law, and lived in an inland town, where there was a great deal of intemperance among some of the young men; and, it seems, that he became disgusted at their conduct, turned his attention to the evil effects of intemperance, and prepared himself to fight against those evils wherever, and whenever, he might meet with them. He has since graduated and engaged in the practice of law, has already distinguished himself as an able jurist, and is destined, from present indications, to stand high among the great men of his profession.

In view of what has been said; in view of the opinions of the oldest and best men in our country, as well as in view of your own observations as to the sad effects of intemperance, we ask, will you not, as a young man "just starting in the world," just embarking on the tempestuous sea of time, reflect upon the evil consequences of this ruinous vice?

Will you not look around you and see how

many, who started on life's journey with prospects as bright as yours are at present, with buoyant hopes of the future, who, by indulging in habits of intemperance, have lost their high and honorable position in society, have lost confidence in themselves, and may now be found associating with the low and vulgar, void entirely of those refined feelings and sentiments by which they were once governed?

If you value life, with all its blessings; if you value health, prosperity and happiness; and if you have any regard for the feelings of your parents, who are watching your steps with so much interest; for the feelings of your friends, who would make any reasonable sacrifice that would be the means of making you honorable; and, above all, if you have any regard for that undying principle in your bosom, that will soon be in another state of existence, resolve never to taste, as a beverage, nor to handle, as a matter of profit, the worst of all poisons, intoxicating liquors.

For, if you do, you will be without excuse for your conduct. You will have no one to blame but yourself. You can not plead ignorance of the effects of strong drink upon the mental and physical constitution. The facts, on this subject, are before you, written out in characters too plain to be misunderstood by any man of ordinary capacity. No young man, in this land of temperance societies, this land of temperance lectures,

will ever be able to say, under existing circumstances, "I am an intemperate man," or, "I have lost fortune, character, and standing in society because I ignorantly indulged in habits of intemperance." For we have but to look around us if we would have a clear view of its results. The plea of ignorance, on this subject, would be a poor apology, at least in this country, in the middle of the nineteenth century.

Our remarks, thus far, have been general. We wish to be a little more explicit on some points that we have, to some extent, already touched. As a matter of convenience, we will arrange what we have to say, under two or three plain propositions.

We notice, in the first place, some of the causes of intemperance.

As a young man that wishes to "be temperate in all things," that wishes to be respectable as to moral character, and useful to others, it is important that you should be familiar, not only with the results of using strong drink as a beverage, but with those things which lead men to become intemperate.

It may be proper here to inquire, What is intemperance? What is implied by the term? We answer, that the best definition that we can find, after having examined several authors, is, "habitual indulgence in drinking spiritous liquors, with or without intoxication;" or, which is substantially the same thing, using them as a beverage. It may

be said, then, that an intemperate man is one who is addicted to the use of spiritous liquors.

Why, then, do men thus indulge? Why do they acquire such habits? Why do they risk so much for so little? Ah! for no good at all. What can induce men to practice the habit of using intoxicating liquors, when they know that such a habit is fraught with so much evil to themselves and others; when they are so well acquainted with the ravages of this monster evil? Various causes have been assigned by different writers and speakers, all of which deserve your special consideration, from the fact, that in guarding successfully against any evil, it is important that we should well understand its origin.

One of the principal causes of intemperance, among young men, is a want of consideration. They do not sufficiently reflect as to the evils that it invariably produces, nor as to its final consequences. For surely no young man of good common sense, after candid and deliberate consideration, and a serious contemplation of the sad results of intemperate habits, as witnessed by him almost every day, would deliberately become a slave to a vice that he knows must, sooner or later, be his ruin. At least we find it difficult to believe such a proposition.

Now it will be remembered that the above remark does not apply to the case of those who are confirmed inebriates from settled intemperate habits. They use intoxicating liquors because

they are fond of the taste, because they have an uncontrollable appetite for them, engendered by their constant use. Such things may be confidently looked for when strong drink is used for any length of time as a beverage. Hence our remarks, on this point, may be applied exclusively to the case of young men who have not acquired such tastes and appetites.

How natural it is for young men to adopt, without due consideration, the views and opinions of their parents on this subject; and how many, by doing so, have found, when it was too late, that the views and opinions of their parents were the most unfortunate for them that they ever entertained.

A young man is apt to argue thus in regard to this matter: "My father is a sensible, clever man, ready to advance my interest and welfare in every way that he can; he is willing, at all times, to shield me from those influences and habits that are injurious in their tendency, and is ever ready to point out to me the path of virtue and morality. He uses spiritous liquors as a beverage, allows me to do the same, and says it is not wrong, unless it is used to excess. My associates and friends advocate and practice the same doctrine, and, therefore, I am inclined to the opinion that if I practice the same things, I have not necessarily committed a very great moral wrong."

But we would ask such a young man—Did you ever call in question the correctness of your father's notions in regard to this matter? Did

you ever reflect that he, like other men, is a fallible being, liable to err in this, as well as in relation to other things? He may be *wrong*. He doubtless *is* wrong, when he says to you that you may use intoxicating liquors as a beverage, without material injury to yourself. Although we have said in another lecture, and believe it to be right for children to obey their parents in all things lawful, yet, we say listen not to your *father* if he says that to use strong drink as a beverage is not evil in its tendency. Follow not his example in this respect, however much you may reverence him as a kind parent, if he from time to time uses as a beverage that fearful poison, which is so destructive to the happiness of man.

If your father and all your friends and associates have been wrong all their lives on this subject, and have practiced the vice of drinking ardent spirits to an extent that is disgraceful, it will be no excuse for you, if you, by following their example, should meet with the same fate. The evidences of the evils of intemperance are held out to your view in various ways, and call loudly for your consideration. Some of your most intimate friends and acquaintances have fallen victims to this fell monster before your eyes; and now, if you will not reflect, if you will not be warned by such examples, but blindly follow the course which they pursued, a course which every reflecting man must condemn, be it so. But remember that in so doing, you are liable

to realize in future what you may now see in the distance, and may avoid by proper reflection.

Again, intemperance often originates in the want of moral courage, upon the part of young men, to resist what they know to be wrong.

It is often the case, that they are satisfied, after mature deliberation, that the use of strong drink, as a beverage, is injurious to the physical constitution, and leads to vice in almost every shape and form, and look upon intemperance, and especially drunkenness, with feelings of disgust. They have often resolved, in seeing its injurious effects here and there, that they never would indulge in the use of intoxicating liquors of any kind.

But they have grown up to manhood, left their parents, gone out into society, and are led, finally, by their associates, to circles in which the use of alcohol as a beverage is a common thing. And now they are invited, and if this is not sufficient, they are urged to take a social glass. They feel that to do so is wrong, contrary to their better informed judgment; but they wish to be agreeable, have n't the moral courage to run the risk of being singular under such circumstances, and, at last, to accommodate their friends, the intoxicating stuff is taken.

How many just here begin a career of intemperance, dissipation and debauch that leads to present and eternal ruin!

Young men, let us urge you not to yield to such influences. Set your face like a flint against

such an evil practice. Guard well against the persuasions of those who are indulging in a habit that has led so many to poverty and wretchedness. Having satisfied yourself that it is wrong to use spiritous liquors as a beverage, never yield to the solicitations of your friends to drink. Break off from their association altogether, however much you may love and admire them, rather than do so. And in your declining days, with confirmed habits of sobriety, enjoying the comforts and blessings of life, and anticipating the blessings of the world to come, you will look back to such steps as being among the best acts of your life.

We might here refer to various other direct and indirect causes of intemperance, such as the example of men occupying a position that gives them great influence over the minds of the young, the laxity of the civil laws in regard to it, and the facilities for obtaining, and the inducements to use intoxicating liquors. But our aim has been to notice the causes which more especially affect the case of young men.

We notice in the next place, some of the evils of intemperance. We say *some* of the evils, which follow habits of intemperance, from the fact, that time would fail us were we to undertake to notice all; and we will confine our attention to a few simple illustrations.

One among the greatest evils that we have

noticed, is the sad change which it often produces in the family circle.

Fancy to yourself a family, where peace, order, and harmony prevails. Where there is conjugal, parental, filial, and fraternal love. The parents are respectable, intelligent, and influential in society; are prospering in their worldly pursuits, and bid fair to occupy a prominent position in the community in which they live. Their children are sprightly, lovely in their manners, agreeable in their disposition, inclined to follow the footsteps of their parents, and seem to delight in obeying and honoring them. It may be said,

> "Here love his golden shafts employ, here lights
> His constant lamp, and waves his purple wings,
> Reigns here, and revels."

So lovely is the dwelling-place of such a family, that the learned, the wise, and the good delight to go there to spend, from time to time, a few pleasant hours in that circle of friendship and love.

But now look at this family a little further along, and O, what a change! That monster, intemperance, has been there, and the father has fallen a victim to his ravages, and the sons are now within his grasp, and destined to fare the same fate. And now, where once might be seen plenty, gayety, cheerfulness, and happiness; we see want with all its attendant evils, sadness, sorrow and misery.

That home once so lovely, "is changed into the pandemonium of disease and cruelty, hatred and malice, ignorance, poverty, disease, and wretchedness."

But the evils of intemperance are, if possible, more clearly illustrated in the case of individuals, than by families or communities.

And here, we ask, who can describe the evils of indulging in the use of ardent spirits, when once such a habit is confirmed? "It mars the beauty of the human face divine," diminishes the brilliancy of the eye, checks the healthy circulation of the blood, and the active play of the limbs, unnerves the constitution, and disqualifies us for all bodily exercise, where health, strength, and a vigorous constitution are called for.

More than this, it impairs the faculties of the mind. It weakens the powers of perception and attention. It dethrones judgment and subjects it to the sway of the passions. It destroys the memory, blunts all the finer feelings and sensibilities of the mind, and leaves us wholly unprepared to arrive at any high degree of intellectual and moral improvement. How many cases may be found in every community that will correspond to the letter, with what has just been said.

Men of all professions and trades, have been ruined by their intemperate habits.

Look around in the community in which you live, and you will see here a physician that was once well skilled in the management of diseases,

but is now so addicted to the use of intoxicating liquors, that no one can feel safe in risking their life in his hands. There you will see a judge, a jurist, a statesman, and worst of all, if we may make a distinction, a minister of the gospel, all of whom were once eminent in their respective professions and callings, who have fallen from their high position, and are now mingling with the very dregs of society.

A very striking instance of this kind, just now presents itself to our mind.

It is the case of a young minister who belonged to the Methodist Episcopal Church. Previous to his conversion and connection with the church, he had contracted habits of intemperance. Afterward, however, he quit the habit and became a sober man, was, some time after he connected himself with the church, licensed to preach the gospel of Christ, joined the annual conference, which embraced the community in which he lived, and traveled therein for some two years. At the close of the last year, he went to conference, where he met with his brethren, not one of whom suspected that he was guilty of any moral wrong.

A few days passed away, and this young minister was taken ill. A physician was called in, and soon discovered, as he thought, that he was afflicted with a slight attack of bilious fever. After attending to his case regularly for some two or three days, with little success, he suspected that there was something wrong in his case.

He came to the writer, and wished to know if we knew any thing of the habits of this minister before he made a profession of religion. We gave him the facts as above stated. He replied, that he wished one or two of this minister's intimate friends to go with him to his (the minister's) room. They went, and under the pretense of changing his bedclothes, found a bottle pretty well filled with spiritous liquor. The mystery connected with his disease was at once solved. He then confessed that he had been drinking to excess for some three or four months previous to the time here specified. The next morning, a reconsideration of his character was called for before the conference and he was immediately expelled; having disgraced himself, and the church to which he belonged.

Now, young men, look at this case for yourself. See how dangerous it is to tamper with strong drink, especially in your youthful days. That young minister, doubtless, thought that he could, and would conquer his appetite for intoxicating liquors, which he had acquired in his youthful days, and labored long and faithfully to do so. But oh, what a failure he made! Like thousands of others in the same condition, having contracted similar habits and appetites, he resolves and re-resolves not to yield to its power, but all to no purpose. He is conquered by it at last, and is ruined by its influence.

And now, we ask, where did the history of

this young man in this respect begin? When he commenced taking a dram occasionally. But where did it end? In the disgrace of a minister of Christ, who was capable (for he was a man of talents) of being useful to the church and to the world, and might have lived happy, died triumphantly, and lived among the blessed forever.

We give another instance of the evils of intemperance, selected from ancient history. It is the case of Alexander the Great.

The historian, after giving an account of Alexander's killing his best friend, Clitus, while under the influence of intoxicating liquor, during a drunken carousal, and of his feelings in regard to the rash act when he came to himself, continues, by saying, "when this same prince was at Babylon, after having spent a whole night in carousing, a second was proposed to him. He went accordingly, and there were twenty guests at table. He drank to the health of every person in company, and then pledged them severally. After that, calling for Hercules' cup, which held an incredible quantity, it was filled, when he poured it all down, drinking to a Macedonian of the company, Proteus, by name; and afterward pledged him again, in the same furious and extravagant bumper. He had no sooner swallowed it, than he fell upon the floor."

"Here, then (cries Seneca, describing the fatal effects of drunkeness), this hero, unconquered by all the toils of prodigious marches, exposed to the

dangers of sieges and combats, to the most violent extremes of heat and cold, here he lies, subdued by his intemperance, and struck to the earth by the fatal cup of Hercules." In this condition he was seized with a fever, which, in a few days, terminated in death. He was thirty-two years and eight months old, of which he had reigned twelve. "No one," says Plutarch and Arian, "suspected then that Alexander had been poisoned; the true poison which brought him to his end was wine, which has killed many thousands besides Alexander."

Still another instance; "Dionysius the younger, king of Syracuse, was so addicted to this enervating folly, that he would sometimes be drunk for a week or ten days together. By this means he ruined his constitution, impaired his faculties, and became so cruel, ridiculous, and contemptible, that, for their preservation and happiness, his subjects were obliged to dethrone him."

Said Chief Justice Hale; "After twenty years' observation and experience, if all the murders, and manslaughters, and burglaries, and robberies, and riots, and tumults; the adulteries, fornications, rapes, and other great enormities, which have been committed within that time, were divided into five parts, four of them would be found to have been the result of intemperance."

Young reader, if what has been said on this subject be true, and we defy any one to establish the contrary, what an awful evil is intemperance!

And how careful should you be in regard to its influence! Never allow yourself to get within reach of its grasp; for fearful beyond description will be your condition if you should.

Before we close we will make a few general observations.

Young men should remember that their influence in society depends greatly upon their being strictly temperate in their habits. Every man should feel himself under obligations to benefit his fellow-beings to the utmost of his ability. It is a duty enjoined upon all men by their Creator; and not to perform that duty, is to render ourselves culpable in his sight. And just in the same proportion that it is our duty to "do good unto all men," is it our duty to avoid the evils of intemperate habits.

Not to avoid the latter, is to disqualify ourselves, to a greater or less extent, for the discharge of the former. An intemperate man is doing harm all the time. If in no other way, he is doing immense injury by his example. If a father, he is injuring his own family, his friends, his associates, and in fact, the whole community in which he lives. If a son, intemperance paralyzes his energies, weakens his moral sensibilities, and takes from him all desire to do good. Instead of doing all he can to build up the waste places of society, and elevate those around him to a high moral position, he is pursuing a course directly the contrary. This is the case, more or

less, with all men of intemperate habits, let their relationship to those around them be what it may.

That you may see more clearly the truth of this last remark, let us ask, which class in society is doing the most to benefit their community, by sustaining her laws and institutions, the temperate portion of the inhabitants or the intemperate? Can any one of ordinary observation be at a loss to answer this question? Surely not. Every individual of common information knows, that it is the temperate portion of society that is urging forward, with so much energy, those measures so well calculated to bless mankind.

Then, if you would be useful as a young man, you must be temperate; and to be temperate, you must abstain entirely from the use of intoxicating liquors as a beverage. By so doing, your mind will be kept on a proper balance. Its faculties and powers will always be in full and active play. And you will be prepared to act in the service of your fellow-beings, not only with deliberation and sound judgment, but with delight to yourself, and all who realize the influence of your noble deeds.

Remember, also, that intemperance, more certainly than almost any thing else, determines the state of men. Scarcely any thing is more difficult than to reach the case of the drunkard, by those influences designed to redeem man, in a religious point of view, and guide his feet into the path that leads to life eternal. Intemperance

seems to harden the heart against all religious impressions, while it is next to impossible to get him to reflect upon his condition morally, to come to the mercy-seat of his Creator, and ask for forgiveness and salvation.

The Gospel, so far as he is concerned, is preached in vain. Although he may occasionally hear it, it makes but little impression upon his mind. His most devoted and pious friends may talk to him about his present condition and future destiny, as an intemperate man; and he will tell them that his course is wrong and leads to poverty and distress. But at the same time, he has no resolution to pursue the path of virtue and piety to which they may direct him. It seems, in fact, that when a man is once confirmed in his habits of intemperance, that he will, in spite of all your persuasions, persist in his miserable course of debauchery, until he reaches the last stage of his miserable existence. And oh! how fearful must be the end of such a man, when we take into consideration that drunkenness is classed with mortal sins!

It is said by an inspired Apostle, "The works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, sedition, heresies, envyings, murders, *drunkenness*, revelings, and such like, of the which I tell you before, as I have already told you in times past, that they which do such things shall not inherit

the kingdom of God." Well might the Apostle say, in another place, in view of this declaration, "Be not drunk with wine wherein is excess."

Young man, do you wish to be useful and happy in life? Do you wish to be intelligent, refined in your manners, pleasant and agreeable in your dispositions? Do you wish others to love, respect, and admire you for your morality and good behavior in society? Above all, do you desire, when the scenes of this world are wound to a close, to live in a brighter, purer world than this? If so, be temperate. Touch not, taste not, handle not, intoxicating liquors; for, whenever you do, you are in imminent danger. Let no influence, however potent, no temptation, however strong, lead you, under any circumstance whatever, to use spiritous liquors as a beverage. Prevent all others from doing so whenever it is in your power. And, by your example, lead all with whom you associate into the path of virtue, morality and religion.

You should always feel a deep interest in the welfare of your country, and be willing to rescue your fellow-beings from the path that leads to wretchedness and misery. And there is no path that leads more directly to this condition than that of intemperance.

If, then, any of your associates are in the habit of indulging in the use of strong drink as a beverage, rest not until you succeed in influencing them to abandon the habit. Remember that their

position, in a short time, may be quite different from what it is at present. They may be heads of families, and those under their care will be following their example. They may be associated with those who are enacting laws that will effect your interests and the interests of your family. O how important that they should be sober, reflecting, and deliberate men! Think of these things while young. Think how much you can accomplish, if you but start and continue in the right direction.

LECTURE VIII.

THE FORMATION OF A GOOD CHARACTER.

Among the learned, and those who have studied more closely the philosophy of human nature, and especially the philosophy of the human mind, there are a great many different opinions as to the origin of the various traits of character manifested by different individuals. Men differ as widely from each other in their moral character, as they do in their opinions or natural appearance. In regard to this fact, there is but little controversy; for it is evident, that among those who have a good or a bad moral character, a vast difference may be perceived by the most careless observer.

But as to the means or influences which produce this diversity of character, there is some disagreement among those who have paid attention to this subject. The point under consideration just here, is embraced in the following question: Why are men so unlike each other as to their moral character? It does not originate in the climate of their country, the form of government under which they live, or the fashions and customs of society with which they are surrounded, (although these things may have much to do in shaping man's character in a national

point of view,) for in these respects all may be alike situated, and yet this difference may be clearly seen.

Some, in investigating the elements of a good character, have attributed this difference to early education and training. They maintain that all young men, who are in possession of a good moral character, have been controlled by the example, influence and training of parents and teachers, who have had a high appreciation of that which is admirable and honorable among men; and that those who have a bad moral character, have been brought up by, and among those who had no regard for refinement of morals or manners, and were base and dishonorable in their entire course of conduct.

Others maintain that nature molds and fashions the character of every individual. Hence they contend, that if this young man has an unblemished character, it is evidence of the fact that nature has endowed him with superior intellectual faculties, which are untrammeled by a frail constitution, to prevent their full development; and that he ought, therefore, in view of his opportunities, to occupy higher ground in regard to moral conduct. And that if the other young man leads a dishonorable life, it is owing to the weakness of his intellectual faculties, and a want of physical health and strength to develop those faculties, and thus enable him to rise higher in the scale of moral purity and goodness.

The young reader will allow the remark here, that some parents are so fully persuaded of the correctness of this last-named position, that they make but little or no effort to "train up their children in the way they should go," and leave them altogether to nature or to chance, so far as their moral character is concerned. But they are responsible for their lack of wisdom and discernment in this matter.

Proper training, and natural endowments may, and doubtless do, have considerable influence in shaping the character of the man; and it would be well for all young men to remember the moral lessons which they have so recently learned from their parents. And they should also remember that whatever else they may receive from their parents, they do not inherit from them their good character. Nor does nature, with all her rich and varied gifts, bestow this upon any individual. Your parents may be truly pious, and strictly moral, and their character may be without a blemish, and you may pursue a course that will be disgraceful to yourself and dishonorable to them. You may be richly endowed with some of nature's best gifts, a noble intellect, keen perceptive powers, a vivid imagination, and judgment sufficient to enable you to decide correctly as to the morality or immorality of any particular course of conduct; and yet these noble faculties may be so neglected or abused by you, that you may be without character or standing in society.

Bring up before your mind two individuals whose opportunities in all these respects, have been the same. Two brothers, for example. They were trained and educated alike. The example set before both was the same, and the same views and sentiments were instilled into their youthful minds. As to their intellectual capacities, there was no discoverable difference. The character of both, while under the control of their parents, was untarnished, so far as relates to any violation of the rules of good society. But now they have left their parents, and stand alone in the world. And is there still no difference as it regards their moral character? So great is the difference in this respect now, that there is scarcely any comparison between them.

One has pursued a moral and upright course among men in every particular, and has refused to stoop to any thing that was low or disreputable. And the result is, as might be expected, all regard him as a man sound in morals, and as *well* deserving the honors which are being conferred upon him. While the other has yielded to improper influences, cast off the badge of honor that he once wore with so much pleasure to himself and others, has fallen from the position that he once occupied, and now, instead of being honored and respected, his conduct is despised by all.

We frequently meet with young men whose parents were not only poor and illiterate, but so immoral and beastly in their manners, that they

were a disgrace to their species, and yet such young men, by proper attention to a better state of things, have learned how to conduct themselves in society, how to act toward others, and have thereby built up for themselves a character which might justly be envied by many of the nobles of the earth. Others, whose parents were wealthy, educated, and refined in their manners, have neglected the rules of propriety, pursued a different course, and now stand on a level with the lowest grade of society, destitute of every thing like moral virtue and refinement.

In vain, then, may we look to the titles, the honors, or the fame of our ancestors to establish our character in this age of light and improvement. In vain may we look to the cultivation of our minds, or our superior mental faculties to establish our claims to a good moral character. For we may have the advantage of all these, and yet our claims may be rejected by all wise and good men. A man's character is now estimated, not by the number of his high-sounding titles, his superiority in office, or his literary fame, but by the good qualities of his heart, as manifested in his life and conduct.

But we wish, if possible, to impress upon the minds of young men the importance of a good moral character. It is of more real value to us, so far as our usefulness and happiness is concerned, than any thing else that is earthly in its nature and origin. A man, without a good char-

acter, may possess fine talents, abundance of wealth, and a vast amount of scientific and intellectual knowledge, and still live in obscurity. While, if he is all right as to moral character, he may be lacking in many other things, and still be prominent among the great men of the world, and may have the confidence of all who know him.

Thousands who have had every opportunity to distinguish themselves in the world, of filling high and honorable offices among their fellow-beings, and of making themselves useful to society, have failed to do so, not for want of intelligence, not for want of skill in the management of the affairs of men, not for want of ability to promote the happiness of men, but for want of those peculiar traits of character without which the confidence of a people never can be secured.

Aaron Burr was, doubtless, a greater man, intellectually, than Benjamin Franklin. In this respect, he had but few equals, and probably no superiors, in his day. He was capable of filling almost any office, and of guiding the affairs of men and of nations, so far as his mental qualifications were concerned; and doubtless would have been a great statesman, and a prominent man in this country, if he had been a man of honesty and moral integrity. But he was lacking in both these respects. His mind was full of low, cunning intrigue. He yielded to his uncontrolled appetites and passions, and disgraced himself, and

all who were associated with him in his career of vice and prodigality. And after living a few years in confinement and obscurity, he died unwept and unpitied by his country.

But now let the young reader direct his attention to the history of Benjamin Franklin, and let him ask—Why was he so distinguished as a statesman? Why was he so honored by the people? Why was he selected to fill so many offices of trust? Why is his conduct in the days of his youth, manhood, and old age, as a man, a statesman, and a patriot, pointed out as a model for others down to the present day? It is not owing to his early advantages, for he was left to shape his own course through life from childhood. It is not owing to wealth, for this he did not possess. It was not owing to his intellectual capacity alone, for many of his equals, in this respect, lived and died in obscurity. Whence, then, his greatness? It was owing to the qualities of the man in a *moral* point of view. He was a man of good moral character. He yielded to the impulse of no low and selfish principle. He had respect for himself and his standing in society. He occupied high and honorable ground in all his movements, and thus gained the confidence of the people, and stood high in their estimation.

That the young reader may see more clearly the importance of a good moral character, let him bring up before his mind the case of that young physician in his neighborhood. He is well edu-

cated, has fine natural sense, has studied every branch connected with the science of medicine, possesses medical skill in no small degree, and as for judgment in the treatment of diseases, seems to be at no loss. And yet his practice, as a physician, seems to be quite limited. No one seems willing to risk their case in his hands. And why? Why does he stand idle all the day, and meet with so little to encourage him in the practice of his profession? The principal reason is, the people have no confidence in his moral integrity. He indulges in so many of the vices of the day, and manifests so little regard for the rules of good society, that the people can not trust him.

That young jurist is a graduate of one of the best law schools in all the country. His powers of eloquence at the bar are surpassed by no one of his age in the profession in which he is engaged. But he is not respected at the bar. Scarcely any one goes to him for council. The community seems to manifest no interest in his welfare; and all who have proper respect for themselves, seem inclined to shun his company; all from the fact that he does not possess those amiable traits of character which would insure his success. These remarks will apply with equal force to the merchant, the mechanic, the farmer, and to young men of all trades and professions.

See that young man who listened to the moral instruction of his parents, who kept himself at a distance from every immoral habit in the days

of his youth; who, amid all the fluctuations of society, and the changes of fortune, has steadily maintained the strictest principles of morality. All men, even bad men themselves, admire his character and his course of conduct. And now the greatest honor that they can confer upon him, is freely bestowed, for they are satisfied that he is worthy of their entire confidence.

Having made these general remarks in regard to the importance of a good character, we will notice more particularly the means to be used in the formation of such a character.

To be successful in this matter, it is highly necessary that a young man should have correct views of a good character. Its outlines should be brought distinctly before his mind, that he may have a correct idea of what is to be aimed at. He may be very energetic, and travel rapidly. He may place a high estimate upon a good character, and desire it above every thing else, but all the time may be going in the wrong direction to secure the object of his pursuit. Thousands of young men, when they have seen or heard of the exalted position which men have obtained, principally because they were men of unblemished character, have resolved that they would refrain from every thing that would produce the slightest stain upon their character; and that they would pursue a course, in future, that would be universally admired, that they might be recognized as men of moral worth, and be universally honored.

But, unfortunately, their calculations were incorrect as to the course to be pursued. They have done a great deal, for which they deserve credit, much that was really praiseworthy; but as the result of ignorance, or inattention to the principal ingredients of a good character, they have taken some steps before they were conscious of their error, which have blasted all their prospects, and deprived them of the object at which they aimed. Very much, then, in the formation of a good character, depends the ideas which we entertain in regard to it.

Perfection, as to character, we need not expect to find; for the most virtuous, exemplary, honest and honorable may discover their own failings, and they may be seen, also, by others. It is not the best policy, then, for a young man to select any particular individual as his model of excellence in this respect; for he may be influenced as much by his bad as by his good qualities. It would be much better for him to select his material, by catching the excellency of every good model. Let him resolve to imitate the example of no one, unless he knows, that in so doing, he is running no risk.

In looking for the proper steps to be taken in the formation of character, we should not rely too much upon the say so of any particular individual or individuals. Men differ very much in their opinions as to what constitutes a model character. What one may tell you to do, another

may tell you to leave undone. And that to which one will attach a great deal of importance, another will attach no importance at all. While one points to this path as leading to distinction of character, another points to a path leading altogether in a different direction; and, at the same time, all may wish to guide you to the same desirable end.

To illustrate: This man urges the absolute necessity of avoiding every thing like dishonesty, but gives no instruction as to the sentiments to be entertained in regard to any other principle of action, esteeming every thing else, when compared with honesty, as a matter of minor importance; while the other will direct you to pay special attention to various other points, which will be strictly observed by those who, in future, may have occasion to investigate the genuineness of your character.

A man of thought, who wishes to have a building erected of the most durable material, will not cease to inquire about this or the other material, after consulting one or two builders, but wishes to select that material which is admitted by all to be the most durable. So it should be with that young man who wishes to build up for himself a good character in the world. While this man gives him useful information on this point, and the other on that, while he may, with propriety, follow this and the other example to a certain or limited extent, he should select, for the

government of his life and conduct, those principles that the wisest and best men in all ages and countries have decided to be genuine and important.

And now, having selected the material and laid a good foundation, let each young man begin, with care and prudence, to erect the building. But, in the mean time, pay proper attention to the advice of wise master-builders, those who have sufficient judgment and experience to justify you in relying upon their skill. And having engaged in the noble work of building up for yourself a good moral character, let nothing discourage you. You may, and doubtless will, find many difficulties in your way. A great deal of rubbish will have to be removed, which will require some little time and patience, and, consequently, you may not make as rapid progress as you could desire, but labor on, and, in due time, the beautiful edifice will be complete; its domes and spires will glitter in the sunbeams, as they point to a more exalted station in life, and will be justly admired by every beholder.

But, after all, the inquiry comes up from every young man who feels interested in this matter, (and, surely, every young man will feel deeply interested as to his character and standing in society), "What is a good character? I see its importance; I am willing to make any reasonable sacrifice that I may obtain it, but of what does it consist? What are its chief elements or ingre-

dients? What are the principal materials to be used in the construction of a good moral character?

We answer, in the first place, that moral honesty is one of the principal elements of a good character.

No man can be dishonest, and at the same time be looked upon as a reliable man, and as one who maintains a good character. That we may stand high in good society, we must be honest, not only in our general conduct, in our business transactions, and in our dealings with other men, but we must be honest with ourselves. The sentiments of the heart; our plans, our aims, and our purposes must all be the offspring of the honest principles by which we are governed. For if we entertain dishonest principles in our hearts, they will manifest themselves in our lives. Their influence will be seen in our words and actions, in our general deportment among men, and in all our associations with men of prudence and discernment.

How often are young men grossly mistaken just at this point? Many of them entertain the idea, that they may be governed by a set of dishonest principles, that they can be actuated by dishonest motives, that they can secure desirable ends in the use of dishonest means; and the community in which they live will never discover their dishonesty in any of their movements or arrangements. Many have tried their fortune in

this way, and nearly, if not quite as many, have been detected in their dishonesty, and all their plans and arrangements broken up. And more than this; in attempting to impose upon their fellow-beings, and deprive them of their rights, they have forfeited their character and standing in society, and stand disgraced by their own misconduct, in the eyes of all honest and good men.

There is a maxim that is quite current throughout this country, and is familiar to the minds of the young as well as the old. It is as follows: "Honesty is the best policy." Now, while we are ready to admit the truth of this declaration, and think it would be well for all young men to remember it, we think the sentence would be deprived of none of its beauty, and at the same time, would set forth honesty, as a principle by which we should be governed, in a more forcible light, by substituting the word *only* for the word "best," as used in the sentence, which would make the sentence read thus: "Honesty is the *only* policy." This, we think, is more in accordance with the principles of sound moral philosophy, and to make it read otherwise, would not be consistent with such principles. To attach any other meaning to this maxim, it would imply that there is other policy which, though not so good as a means of securing any desirable end in life, might be pursued without material injury to our character, or any plan that we may have adopted to secure our welfare or happiness.

We are fully of the opinion, that no man can pursue a dishonest course, whether it be to secure a good name, wealth, honor, or worldly fame, without realizing, before he has pursued this course very far, that he is traveling the wrong road. His plans may all seem to work well for a while. He may, in some instances, gain the object which he had in view. He may have succeeded in making the impression, that he is honest and correct in all his dealings with others, and that he would take no undue advantage of them. But ere long you will find, if you will closely observe, that he is gloomy, discontented and unhappy. His reflections are something like the following: "Others think that I am honest, but I know that I am dishonest. Others think that I am a man of sound moral principles, and have a good character, but I know that I have frequently violated these principles. And if my real character was understood, I should be despised by all honest men." And now, he is prepared to realize the force of the maxim, to which, allusion has already been made, "Honesty is the *only* policy."

If, then, as a young man, you wish to build up a good moral character, be honest. Let nothing tempt you to stoop to a dishonest act, or to use any unlawful means by which to succeed in life. Be honest in small matters, as well as in those of more importance. For if you take one dishonest step, it will open the way for another. Hence you should be guarded at every point. Many in-

ducements and strong temptations will be presented to your minds, to lead you from the path which alone can conduct you to an honorable position in society, but remember, every time you are thus tempted, that honesty is one of the principal materials to be used in the construction of a good character.

Another important element of a good character, is integrity. Which is, as defined by a standard author, moral soundness, honesty, purity. And, according to the views of a distinguished writer, signifies incorruptibility, soundness of heart, uprightness.

In other words, it is that principle which prompts us at all times to do our duty. To do what we feel and know to be right. To do so irrespective of the example and opinions of others; irrespective of surrounding circumstances, be they what they may. There is no trait of character more to be admired, or that will be of more service to us in the accomplishment of the great ends of life. In fact, it will be impossible for us, without this, to occupy a very prominent position among those who belong to the better classes of society.

It is frequently the case with young men, that although they are satisfied as to the importance of moral integrity as an element of genuine character, as a principle of moral philosophy from which they should never deviate, they find, in view of their associations in life, that it is very difficult to carry it out in their practice. In at-

tempting to do so, they will sometimes subject themselves to the scorn and ridicule of others, bring upon themselves the hatred of the rich and powerful, and will often find themselves with a small minority. If there was but little danger of our turning aside from the path of uprightness, there would be comparatively, but little necessity of guarding this point so closely. But the fact, that the moral integrity of the young man is more frequently and strongly attacked than any other moral principle that he may wish to maintain, goes to show how important it is for him to fortify himself, especially at this point.

A good general will always guard well the point from which the most danger is to be expected. And all young men, in this matter, should act upon the same principle. Let them maintain their integrity, though the rich, the influential, and the powerful persuade them to pursue a different course. For it will be of more real value to them than gold or silver, or the most costly pearls.

The conduct of the Rev. Richard Watson, a minister of the Gospel, in England, and his reply to the king upon a certain occasion, furnishes a good illustration of this virtue.

Mr. Watson commenced preaching the Gospel of Christ at the age of fifteen, or early in his sixteenth year. Devoting himself closely to his studies, he soon distinguished himself as a writer, as well as a powerful and eloquent speaker. A few years after he commenced his labors as a

minister, he wrote a pamphlet in which he ably advocated and defended the doctrines of the eternal sonship and divinity of Jesus Christ. The king going one day to the office of his secretary, found him busily engaged, reading this pamphlet, but ceased as soon as the king came in, who requested him, soon as he learned what he was reading, to read on. Having read a few pages he again ceased to read, but was requested again by the king to read on, and after listening until his secretary had read most of the pamphlet, he inquired for the name of the author, and was told that it was Richard Watson. The king then said to his secretary, without explanation, "summons Mr. Watson to appear before me on to-morrow morning."

Receiving this summons, Mr. Watson was very much surprised; but said, in the true spirit of submission, "I must obey the king." Having obeyed the summons, the king asked him if he was the author of the pamphlet referred to above. He answered that he was. To what church do you belong, inquired the king. To the Methodist Episcopal Church, said Mr. Watson. Then said the king, "I wish you to join the established Church. Said Mr. Watson, I am satisfied with my church relationship, and wish to make no change. The king then offered him a large salary, and one of the best appointments in the city of London, to induce him to comply with his request, and still he refused.

Here you see the nature and the beauty of integrity. Mr. Watson honestly believed in the doctrines and usages of the M. E. C. And felt that to join the Church of England, would be to sacrifice principles that he believed to be right. This he refused to do. Though a poor man, having a family to support, he would not do violence to his conscience for the sake of wealth, honor, or the favor of the king.

This is an example of integrity worthy to be imitated by all. The king seeing that Mr. Watson was a man of strict integrity, that he would not yield to any thing contrary to his convictions of right, gave to each of his children a sufficient amount of money to render them comfortable during their lives.

Young men are sometimes so situated, that they are ashamed or afraid to avow their sentiments, fearing that they are not popular, and that they will, thereby, lose public favor and patronage. But, whoever shrinks from an avowal of sentiments and principles which he honestly believes to be right, that he may gain the favor of others and their patronage in business, or to secure the friendship of the great and influential, will soon find from sad experience, that he is pursuing the wrong course. The merchant, the physician, the jurist, and the politician sometimes bend from principles to gain popular favor; but in every instance that we have yet noticed, instead of gaining, they have lost popular favor, and, at the

same time rendered themselves very unpopular. It is generally supposed, in fact, that if a man will swerve from his principles in one instance, he might be induced to do so in others.

A young man, after mature deliberation, having resolved to pursue a certain course, from honest conviction that it is right, should never deviate from such a course under any circumstances, unless he is fully convinced afterward that he is wrong. And especially should he not do so merely to suit the whims or fancy of others. As an illustration of this principle, you believe it to be wrong to play cards, to go to the theater, or to any place of public amusement calculated to injure the morals of young men. Your belief is founded on evidence sufficiently strong to satisfy your mind that you are right.

But now you meet with an old acquaintance or associate who urges you to take a social game, or to go with him to the theater; and you frankly tell him that you believe these things to be wrong, and you can not do so consistently with your feelings and convictions in regard to them. Now, if you yield to his persuasions, you do violence to your own conscience, lose confidence in your own firmness and integrity, and take one step toward ruin, so far as your moral character is concerned.

Let me urge the young reader, then, if he wishes to build up for himself a good moral character, to cultivate, industriously, the virtue of integrity in small matters as well as in the most

important business transactions of his life. Convince those with whom you associate, that you act from principle in all that you do, and not from the mere impulse of the moment. That you are actuated by high and honorable motives in all your movements and associations in life. And soon will your conduct be admired as far as you are known.

But before we close our remarks upon this subject, it may not be out of place to state, that in the formation of a good character, much depends upon the disposition that we manifest toward our fellow-beings, and especially toward our inferiors.

It is highly important, then, that a young man should possess an amiable and forgiving disposition. A man may be honest and upright in all his dealings, in his general conduct, and in the motives by which he is actuated, and yet he may be so disagreeable in his manners, and resentful in his feelings, that no one can love or admire him. We have seen many instances of this kind. We should cultivate with great care a disposition to please others. Not by a sacrifice of our principles by any means, or by yielding to that which is wrong, but by a constant regard to the feelings and rights of others. It is this amiable disposition that prompts us to render to all their due. This is the foundation of that honor and esteem that we owe to superiors in rank, or intellectual abilities, and of that quiet submission to our lot

among men, and to the rules and regulations of good society.

It is also important that a young man should be of a forgiving disposition. For, if he resents every little injury, and pursues his enemies with feelings of revenge, it will be almost impossible for him ever to take a very prominent stand among men. "If indeed, power and esteem are the principal objects of human attention, the highest power over the minds of men, and their most perfect esteem, are oftentimes obtained by a forgiving, rather than a resenting disposition; an enemy won over by kindness is always the most durable friend. There is nothing excites greater gratitude than forbearance; when resentment would have been justifiable; nothing that secures so forcibly our admiration, as to perceive that any man is so much the master of his own nature; like the apostle in the ship, when we see him rising up and rebuking the winds and waves of the mind, we are beyond measure amazed, and ask what manner of man may this be who can command his own soul, and whom the passions and angers obey."

The idea prevails, in the minds of many young men, that they are bound, in order to maintain their character and standing, to resent every injury which they may receive, however trivial it may be. But among our greatest and wisest philosophers, it is clearly decided to be more noble and honorable to forgive an individual who has

offended us, especially if he repents, than to act upon the principle set forth in the following language: "I will pursue, I will overtake; my right hand shall dash in pieces mine enemy." And we have still higher authority for saying "forgive and ye shall be forgiven."

In the formation of character, a young man should pay special attention to several other principles and rules of action, that we can not conveniently notice in this lecture. Such, for instance, as justice, morality, adherence to truth, submission to the laws of the country, and the like. These we may notice, or at least some of them, in the succeeding lecture.

In the construction of a character, you should remember that you will meet with a great many obstacles. You may understand the principles by which you should be governed, feel their influence upon your mind, and appreciate the noble ends to which they lead; but innumerable difficulties stand in the way of their attainment. Temptations will steal around you from time to time, and exert a powerful influence upon your mind. While all men may and should be honest, it is a very easy matter for them to be otherwise. And when they once become dishonest, it seems to afford them pleasure to induce all others to become so, if they can possibly reach them by their influence. You must guard at this point especially. Such men will promise you wealth, security against danger, and worldly pleasure, to induce

you to join with them in their dishonest and disgraceful deeds, and your only security against the influence of such temptations and inducements, is to have the mind well fortified with the principles of honesty and integrity, and with every other virtue that beautifies and adorns the character.

Let the young reader reflect for a moment upon the condition of that individual who is destitute of moral honesty and integrity. How low and degraded his condition; how wretched his feelings! No one has confidence in him, and he has none whatever in himself. The consequence is, he is doomed to a life of degradation and misery. See him as his countenance falls, and his courage sinks within him, while he is momentarily in the presence of men of honorable standing. See how he shrinks from human observation. His appearance and all his movements indicate that he is wrong at heart, and that his principles and motives are dishonest.

Remember that your destiny, as to character and standing, is in your own hands. It is with you to pursue a low and dishonorable course in life, and to occupy a degraded position among men, or to be governed by those noble and lofty sentiments that will secure to you an elevated position among the great, the wise, and the mighty of the earth.

Bear in mind also, that while you are forming a character among men, that that character will have a direct bearing upon your condition in an-

other state of existence. You may stand high among men, have their confidence as a man of integrity, and yet be destitute of those principles and qualifications by which alone you can be enabled to stand before "the King of kings and Lord of lords," in the great day of accounts. While society presents its claims for your consideration, and holds out strong inducements to a life of virtue and uprightness; the just claims of your Creator are to be met, his laws are to be obeyed, and his requisitions are to be complied with, before you are prepared for the society of the pure and the blest around his throne. Seek earnestly for a character without a blemish, strive, by your influence and example, to elevate the standard of moral virtue, and your conduct will meet with the approbation of your fellow-beings, and your reward shall be sure.

LECTURE IX.

SUCCESS IN LIFE.

How various are the views of men in reference to life, and especially in regard to success in life. Some men seem to look upon life as an insignificant, fleeting, uncertain something, and suppose that they can disregard its peculiar claims with impunity. Many are to be found, who, from incorrect views of life, or from having taken some misguided steps in their younger days, which have caused them to lose confidence in themselves and in their fellow-beings, seem to regard it as a matter of small importance, and act as if they felt themselves under no obligations to conduct themselves in such a manner that its greatest ends might be accomplished by and through them.

We have seen men who seemed to despise life, with all its blessings as well as its evils. But we have seen, at the same time, that such men were useless appendages to society, and were miserable beyond description. Now we admit that some things in life are insignificant, but when the whole of life is viewed in this light, such a theory is radically false. If a young man adopts this theory, he is very apt to close his eyes against all that is beautiful in nature, and sublime in philos-

ophy; and will soon find himself on a level with that which is little and low in the estimation of all who take a more reasonable and comprehensive view of things. But if he appreciates life as he should, as an important gift from heaven, and feels that it is a glorious thing to live, he can then view it in its proper light from the cradle to the grave. He may then be prepared, in due time, to act his part among men, and thus accomplish the great ends of his present existence.

But men differ widely in their views of success in life, also. Every man has some particular theory in this respect. Question that youth a short time, and you will soon perceive that the future has been looming up before his mind, presenting to his imagination glowing pictures of wealth, pleasure, or distinction among men, and his plans, for securing some or all these, are distinctly marked out, and he is sanguine of success.

But if you will propound the same questions to another, you will find that his views of the future, and his plans and aims are altogether different.

One views success in life as being nothing more nor less than gaining that point, where, uncontrolled by parental restraint or any other influence, he can enjoy the pleasures of the world to the fullest extent, where he can give a loose rein to his passions, and gratify the most vitiated appetites and propensities. Another limits it to making money, securing a vast amount of wealth, so that he may live in splendor, make a great

show in the world, have every thing to his own liking, and be independent of all men. This is his highest conception of success in life, and in all his movements, this is the object that he has in view. He thinks but little of honesty, of justice, of integrity, of moral character: wealth is his aim, and, right or wrong, he intends to succeed.

A third limits success in life to the execution of some favorite scheme of ambition. Success, with him, is to gain distinction among men on account of his boldness in times of imminent danger, or the performance of some noble deed, the execution of which requires more than ordinary skill and courage. He longs for the time to come, when, at the point of the bayonet or the mouth of the cannon, he can display his valor, and thus gain the plaudits of his fellow-beings. We might here set forth various other false notions of success in life, but we think it unnecessary.

It may be remarked here, that more correct views of success in life can not be expected of many of the young men of this country, under existing circumstances. Wrong impressions are made upon their minds, in the first place, by their parents. By them they are taught, not only to follow, but to keep up with the fashions of the age, without regard to the results which may follow. The books which they read, the influences brought to bear upon their minds, and the example of those who have more experience in the

world than they have, are all calculated to establish, more fully, those false ideas of success in life which lead so many astray.

Young persons should be taught that success in life "consists in being what we ought to be; in doing what we ought to do; in attaining what we ought to attain; in making life what our Creator designed it to be made. We have a physical existence to support, and hence success involves this duty. We have minds to develop, hearts to purify, moral and social relations to sustain; and, consequently, success is connected with the discharge of these obligations. It looks to the use of every thing that nature, providence and religion supply for the growth and perfection of a wise, just, generous, noble Christian manhood; a manhood that shall be competent to all its offices, and adorn them with the luster of its own transcendent beauty."

How few young men keep these great objects before their minds, while they begin and follow the various avocations of life. "If indeed," says the author just quoted, "this is the true idea of success in life, it is not necessary to show that the great majority of men have an exceedingly low and imperfect conception of its nature and end."

It is very important that a young man, in taking a start in life, should feel that it is a reality; that he not only has something to do, but that he is responsible for the manner in

which that something is done; and that while he is attending to the various duties and callings of life, he is exerting a good or a bad influence in society. Many are to be found, who, notwithstanding they are pursuing a course that is decidedly wrong, suppose that they are not responsible for the injury they inflict upon others, but for that only which they bring upon themselves. But they could hardly make a greater mistake, or one that is more fatal in its tendency. And those who look upon the great objects to be accomplished in life as consisting of pleasure, wealth, or the gratification of worldly ambition, are very apt to pursue a course that is injurious to themselves, and will, to a greater or less extent, affect the condition of all who allow themselves to be influenced by their example.

We remark here, that it is well for young men, in the great business of life, to guard against all extremes in its various pursuits. Some, after they have laid their plans for future success as to temporal matters, seem to forget every thing else. Believing that they are honest in their intentions, that in carrying out their plans they infringe upon no man's rights, they bend all their energies into one channel, and think of nothing else but of gaining the object of their pursuit, be that what it may. Christianity may present its claims, but they have no time to attend to them. This and the other scheme of benevolence may be laid before their minds, for their consideration and action, but they

are disregarded by them. Different plans for the moral improvement of society may be suggested to them, but however reasonable they may be, or however effectual they might be in the accomplishment of good, they will pass them by altogether unnoticed. They seem to be blind to every other interest, and deaf to every other call. They have but one rule, and that is, to bend every thing into the channel which leads directly to the object of their aim.

"On the other hand, there are individuals of virtue and excellence who embrace only the moral and religious aspect of character and conduct in their scheme of human existence. If the precepts of a Divine morality, as taught by Jesus Christ, are practiced, it matters not what are their earthly circumstances." There are persons of this description to be found in all communities. They seem to pay but little or no attention to any thing of an earthly character, but occupy their minds exclusively about that which is spiritual in its nature. Well, one of these extremes, so far as the individual himself is concerned, is nearly as bad as the other, although the latter may not be so bad in its practical tendency. Man has a body as well as a soul, and it is proper that he should attend to the interests of both. To neglect the body may not be quite so bad a crime as to neglect the soul, but we should make it a point to neglect neither. Besides this, by paying no attention to temporal matters, we shall evidently be

unprepared to render much assistance to the cause of benevolence or humanity in the world, and thereby fail to obey the precepts which we so much admire. A young man should weigh these matters candidly and honestly, and, after mature deliberation, should pursue a course that will meet the claims against him in both respects. And while he gives to business transactions a reasonable share of his attention, he should never let them encroach upon his religious duties, or prevent him from watching, with deep interest, every thing that bears upon his moral or religious character.

With but few exceptions, all young men look to the development of the future for the realization of the objects which they most desire. But we may discover, among them, some disagreement as to that which is most desirable, and as to the means of obtaining it. No one man could point out, in detail, a course to be pursued in life in order to success, that would suit the fancy, or be well adapted to the case of every young person, for all have their peculiar notions; and to follow any particularly specified course would be, in the estimation of many of them, to vary from some cherished rule of action, which would ruin all their prospects. Whatever may be the peculiar notions of a young man, however, he should never be satisfied until he has some definite plan devised for himself which he believes, if successfully carried out, will secure to him the greatest amount of good.

But while he invents, plans, and labors, and while he struggles against rivalry, deceit, and oppression, the most important inquiry of all is, what should be the great object of his aim? What is it for which he should strive? At what point, in his history, may he conclude that he has been successful in life? We answer, that he should aim to secure a sufficiency of the things of this world to supply his material and social wants; and a sufficiency of intellectual knowledge and information to give him a dignified position in society, and to qualify him for usefulness among his fellow-beings. We add here, though it does not properly come within the range of this lecture, that his moral growth and improvement is connected with success in life, and should not be overlooked. He should remember that real and substantial happiness can only be secured by a life of virtue and religion.

Having made these general remarks, we notice more especially the course to be pursued, in order to success in life.

And in the first place, we remark that success in life depends, to a considerable extent, upon the selection of some honorable business.

The idea prevails among many at the present period, that makes but little difference as to the kind of business in which we engage, so we conduct that business honestly, and it supplies our temporal wants. But this is a great mistake. And hundreds are now to be found, who, if their

real sentiments were known, attribute their ill success in life, to having engaged in some business in early life that was inconsistent with the rules of morality. This is so evident, that it scarcely needs an argument, or an illustration to make it more plain. For if a man engages in a dishonorable business, it brings him in contact with dishonorable men. And to associate with such men, is not only dangerous but ruinous.

Look, for instance, at the theatrical performer, the professional gambler, or those who have made it their business to deal out intoxicating liquors. Their associations are such, that it is almost impossible for them to make any improvement in a moral point of view. For they have comparatively, no time for reflection, no time for those serious thoughts, without which no man can lead a life of virtue. The result is, he forgets his responsibility, not only to his Creator, but to society. And now he begins, step by step, to deviate from the path of uprightness and honesty, to adopt sentiments which are radically wrong; soon resorts to the use of unlawful means to secure the end they have in view, and finally bring upon themselves disgrace and ruin.

If a young man does succeed well in life, he ought to have the consoling reflection that he has done so upon honorable principles. For if he succeeds upon any other principle, he can not enjoy the fruits of his labors. Did you ever see an individual who had spent the prime of his life in

gambling, or some other unlawful business, who seemed to be happy in his old age? Never. True, such an one may live in a splendid palace, richly furnished, and may have all the conveniences of life around him; but at the same time, his appearance indicates a discontented state of mind, and demonstrates that honest poverty is much better than unjust wealth.

On the other hand, to engage in a business which is in exact keeping with just and honorable principles, will secure for us the attention, favor, and associations of the best classes of society. And this, of itself, will strengthen our purposes to do that which is lawful and right. Let a man be conscious that his sentiments, feelings and actions all point in the right direction, and let him, at the same time, have a strong desire to avoid that which he conceives to be wrong, and he will soon find that his course is universally admired. And to be admired by our fellow-beings on account of our integrity in business transactions, and to feel that we are honored because we are just, stimulates us to go forward in the path of duty. And this is the only true road to success in life, to permanent happiness.

We are familiar with the case of a young man, which will serve as an illustration of the point now under consideration. He was brought up by pious parents, immediately in the neighborhood where we were raised. When quite young, he professed religion and joined the church, of which

he was a very consistent member for several years. We have no doubt but he was sincere in his pretensions. All who knew him seemed to have the utmost confidence in his integrity and piety. He was, also, industrious and economical, and was unusually active and sprightly in business. He was a young man of more than ordinary talents, strictly moral, and seemed, in feeling and practice, to be directly opposed to those little vices, as they are denominated, in which young persons are so apt to indulge. But the period finally arrived when he must commence business for himself, when he was to be thrown upon his own resources, and depend upon his own efforts as a means of getting along in the world.

Unfortunately for that young man, he engaged in the liquor traffic. His friends were surprised, and one after another warned him of his danger, and insisted on his changing his business. He told them that there was no danger, that he intended to conduct the business in which he was engaged, honestly, and he thought he could do so without injury to himself in any way, and was disposed to risk the consequences. He still attended church, went to Sabbath school, and seemed to maintain his position in the community as an honorable young man. But his business soon led him to associate with men, many of whom were without moral principles, had no regard for religion, no regard for the welfare of the young men of their country. In a short time it was to be seen

that this young man had undergone a great change, as to sentiments, feelings, and actions. He was now very seldom seen at church, scarcely ever at Sabbath school; but might be seen, on the Sabbath day, dealing out strong drink to him that was athirst for such stuff, or engaged in some thing else, which was equally demoralizing in its tendency.

But what are the facts in relation to that young man at present? We answer, that he is almost a confirmed drunkard, a gambler, and a profane swearer; and the young reader can imagine the rest. Well, is it not evident to every reflective mind, that if this young man had engaged in some other business, that he would still be the same respectable, influential citizen that he once was? Here, then, we see the necessity of engaging in honorable business, if we would be successful in life according to the true import of that phrase. It may be truly said, in one sense of the word, that the man makes the business. But it is equally true, in another sense, that the business makes the man. Be careful, then, as to the kind of business in which you engage. Look not only to the profits of business, but to its tendency in a moral point of view. And remember that you had much better work by the day at some honorable employment, than to be in the most lucrative business in the world, which will necessarily lead you to do violence to your own conscience.

Again, we observe that a general knowledge of

business is very essential as a means of success in life.

We should have a thorough knowledge of the general principles of business, as well as of its "petty details." And especially of that branch of business in which we are engaged. And we should look well, also, to those circumstances and other causes which produce its steadiness or its changes. Much depends upon our having sufficient information in regard to it, to enable us to guard every point from which danger is to be expected. Many individuals are unfortunate from the fact, that they are unable to see clearly the influences which are operating against them, when, if they would inform themselves, and guard against those influences, they would get along smoothly, and do well. There are various points in all kinds of business, which should be studied until they are well understood.

It stands every business man in hand to inquire, how can I open up a communication between myself and the world? How can I secure their patronage? In what way can I obtain custom without false inducements, and retain it for mutual profits? We should investigate these points until we have mastered them. We should never rest satisfied until we have gone to the bottom of these things. And then we shall be prepared to transact business with a degree of intelligence that will be creditable to ourselves, and to the satisfaction of all with whom we are associated.

It is said by one, "that superficial knowledge is always dangerous, but in trade and commerce it is a positive evil." And if we will but look at the strange methods adopted by some men to carry on their regular business, we can not fail to perceive the truth of this declaration. Some men seem to suppose that their business is disconnected with every other trade or profession, and, therefore, pay no attention to any other department of business, except that to which theirs properly belongs. The result is, their operations are limited to a very small compass; when, really, one branch of business is necessarily connected with many others. And in many instances so intimately, that one can not be successfully carried on without the other. Hence, we say, that every man, if possible, should have a general knowledge of the various kinds of business followed by different men, that he may know how to act in harmony with others, and mutually promote each other's interest.

We know it may be said, that if a young man attends well to one branch of business, trade, or profession, and makes himself thoroughly acquainted with it, that he will be kept busy enough. But this is all a mistake. And one, too, which is fatal to the interests of hundreds of young men. Now, we have virtually admitted that we should first become practically acquainted with the technicalities and peculiar changes of our own branch of business. But we should go further than this,

and, as far as possible, become acquainted with every other kind of business which comes within our range. We may see after awhile, that it would be better to change our business, and engage in something else. And if we have trained our minds to run in one channel only, we will find it difficult to bring it into active exercise in any other capacity.

Then again, "every now and then the world changes front; new interests take the lead; innovations change the surface of things. You must, therefore, watch the course of civilization, and go with it. Be a practical observer of that ever-varying scene, human life; and while you adhere to fixed principles and great ends, keep yourself alive to the art of consistent and effective adaptation. Have no fancies and crotchets. Never overstate arguments to yourself, and be suspicious of much logic." * * * "Another thing ought to be weighed; no thoughtful person would wish that his business should outgrow him, and yet numerous instances have we known of men prospering faster than they acquired intelligence and skill to manage a widening field. There is a certain work for the mind in every sphere of life, which time alone can do. It can not be anticipated. Our observation, reading, study of to-day may lie dormant within the brain for years—not dead, however—but slowly germinating for a plentiful harvest. This is especially true of business. Its most valuable wisdom, founded in experience,

is a slow growth; and every one should be willing to wait that maturity before he indulges his ambition and enterprise for a great business."

But again, decision of mind, and fixedness of purpose are important as a means of success in life.

Having engaged in some kind of business, or commenced studying, with the design of practicing law or medicine, or with the intention of becoming a politician or statesman; or of becoming an artist or mechanic, be steady in your purpose. Unless some insurmountable difficulty rises up before you, and you are thoroughly convinced, by positive evidence, that you are pursuing the wrong course, persevere, and be determined to succeed. Thousands, for want of firmness and steadfastness in business, have failed of success. Show me a young man who, in all the fluctuations of business, is firm in his purpose, who continues to persevere under the most discouraging circumstances, and, nine times out of ten, we will show you one who will gain the point at which he aims. While, on the other hand, a young man who is all energy to-day, and seems flushed with the idea of success, and on to-morrow seems depressed in spirits, and is ready to change his business and engage in something else, we may take it for granted that he will never do much for himself, or any one else.

To see the importance of decision of mind, and of perseverance in what you undertake, look for

a moment at the case of Demosthenes, the most renowned of all the ancient orators. In his first public speech he was hissed at by the whole audience. He withdrew from the crowd with his head hung down in great confusion. He had an impediment in his speech which prevented him from speaking with that fluency that was necessary to attract the attention of the people. He was met by a friend, however, who assured him that the difficulty in the way might be overcome if he would apply himself closely to study, with a determination to be successful. His friend, an excellent orator of those times, gave him a great deal of instruction that was appropriate to his case; and Demosthenes then determined to make of himself a great orator. To get clear of the impediment in his speech, he put small pebbles into his mouth, and would pronounce several verses in that manner without interruption.

It is said, too, that "he went also to the sea-side, and while the waves were in the most violent agitation, he pronounced harangues, to accustom himself, by the confused noise of the waters, to the roar of the people, and the tumultuous cries of public assemblies."

The same historian tells us, that "his pains were well bestowed; for it was by these means that he carried the art of declaiming to the highest degree of perfection of which it was capable."

As a further illustration of this point, let us suppose that a young man begins the study of

law, with the intention of becoming a jurist; and after making considerable progress that way, changes his notion, and resolves to qualify himself for the practice of medicine. And now that he is qualified, and has commenced this business, let us suppose that he becomes dissatisfied, and resolves on being a farmer, and with this intention, abandons the practice of medicine. Can it be expected that this young man will succeed? All must see that it is very probable that he will fail in every thing that he undertakes.

Now, we would not be understood here as saying, that a man should never change his business or his plan of operation. There are times in which this may be done, to great advantage, as has been already intimated. If the business, trade, or profession in which we are engaged, ceases to be of importance, owing to some revolution in trade or commerce, in the community in which we live, wisdom and sound judgment would dictate that we should, to a certain extent, be governed by such circumstances. But great caution is necessary at such times. And such changes should be made after mature deliberation, and with an eye to the influence that it may have upon our moral and intellectual improvement.

LECTURE X.

SUCCESS IN LIFE.—CONTINUED.

We notice, in the next place, that to succeed in life, we must adhere strictly to truth, and guard well against falsehood upon the part of others.

"Upon truth rests all human knowledge; to truth man is indebted for the hourly preservation of his life, and for a perpetual guide to his actions. Without truth the affairs of the world could no longer exist, as they now are, than they could if any of the great physical laws of the universe were suspended. As truth is of indispensible necessity in the great concerns of the world, it is also of immense importance, as it relates to the common and daily intercourse of life. Falsehood must have a direct and powerful tendency to disturb the order of human affairs, and to introduce into the bosom of society every gradation and variety of mischief."

If you would see how improbable it is that a notorious liar will succeed in any kind of business, look what a low estimate is put upon the degraded wretch by those who are acquainted with him. His friends, if he has any, are afraid of him, and keep at the utmost distance from him. He can no longer get them to believe any thing that he says. But he is heard in contemptuous silence,

and treated, as he should be, as a man upon whom no one can rely. The people, as might be expected, shrink from and abhor him as though he was a monster not fit to live among men. And he "lives to witness a gradual conspiracy against him of all that is good, and honorable, and wise, and great."

That species of lying which is most degrading in its character, and the most injurious in its tendency, generally has its origin in a disposition or determination to defraud others, and, by deception, to gain some advantage of them in the common concerns of life. And that man who is guilty of this kind of falsehood, is dangerous to the well-being of society, and should be dreaded by every truthful and honest man; for while it ruins the moral character of him who is guilty of this species of lying, and is awfully pernicious in its consequences, there is but little probability of bringing such an individual back to the path of truth and virtue; and the sooner a community gets clear of such a pest, the better it will be for it. Instead, then, of upholding such a man in a community, and giving him an opportunity of getting along well in business, every man who has proper regard for the general happiness of society, will be trying to keep him from getting the advantage of them, by having nothing to do with him.

Hundreds in every community are in the habit of lying in their ordinary business transactions as

a matter of gain. They seem to have practiced this evil until they have no more regard for truth, than if it was not required of them either by God or man. And they will take more pains to get those with whom they trade to believe that which is false, than they will to get them to believe the plain truth, if that truth is, in any way, involved in mystery.

And, after all, how useless a thing is lying in any kind of business! A man, by falsehood, may get along rapidly in business for awhile, but, at the last, that falsehood will be the means of his downfall and destruction. The liar is not apt to go unpunished. We may, by lying, deceive and impose upon others for awhile, but when the falsehood is detected, it will do us tenfold more harm than the profits of lying can possibly do us good, besides the loss we sustain as to moral character and standing in society. Scarcely any thing of which we could be guilty would give others a worse opinion of us than for them to learn that we are in the habit of lying. While contemplating the condition and character of that individual who has come to the years of maturity, and who has been so unfortunate as to be looked upon as a notorious liar, we have thought it would have been much better for him if he had never been born, or for him to have died in the days of his youth.

A few years ago we attended the sale of a lot of dry goods, in one of the smaller towns in

Kentucky. They were sold at auction by a merchant from one of the eastern cities. When this sale first commenced, each article was cried off at something like its true value. It soon became evident, however, that the gentleman, if we may so call him, who was disposing of the goods, was knowingly and positively lying about every package which he disposed of. The purchasers soon became disgusted at his course, and commenced hissing at him to his face. He soon discovered that he had adopted the wrong policy; for package after package commenced going off at a large per cent. below their real value. The people saw and knew this, but they resolved that they would run no further risk of being imposed upon by a man who evidently intended to sell at large profits by positive lying. The result was, he packed his goods and left the town, and went to an eligible point in another State; but scarcely had he commenced operations there, before the report came, as upon the wings of the wind, that his object was to succeed, by misrepresentation, and he again made a failure.

Here we see the evil consequences of falsehood in connection with any business transaction. If that young man had pursued an honorable course, and adhered strictly to the truth, he would have disposed of his goods at a fair value, and would have saved himself a great deal of trouble and expense, and, at the same time, have had an approving conscience. But, as it was, he disgraced

himself in the estimation of all who had formed an acquaintance with him.

It was very truly said by that close observer of human nature, Sidney Smith, "it is almost impossible to deceive the great variety of talent, information, and opinion, of which the world is composed. Truth prevails, by the universal combination of all things animate or inanimate, against falsehood; for ignorance makes a gross and clumsy fiction; carelessness omits some feature of a fiction that is ingenious; bad-fellowship in fraud betrays the secret; conscience bursts into atoms; the subtility of angry revenge unvails it; mere brute, unconspiring matter reveals it; death lets in the light of truth; all things teach a wise man the difficulty and bad success of falsehood; and truth is inculcated by human policy, as well as by divine command."

All young men who may endeavor to succeed in life by falsehood, are sure, sooner or later, to realize the truth of what is here said. Beside this, you wish to occupy at least a respectable position in society. You wish to have the confidence of those with whom you are associated. But if you indulge in this sinful habit, you will occupy the most degraded position among men, and deprive yourself of present and eternal happiness.

But we must not only adhere to the truth, but guard against misrepresentation upon the part of others. In view of what has been said, we need make but a remark or so upon this point. While

many are to be found who, from principle or as a matter of policy, never say any thing at variance with the truth, thousands, with whom we may have to do, will be seeking to get the advantage of us, and to deprive us of our rights, by false statements and insinuations. A great many young men have been ruined, as to fortune and character, by having too much confidence in the veracity of others. In some respects, we may be as speedily ruined by relying too implicitly upon what is said by others, as by uttering falsehoods ourselves.

When the serpent came to Eve, tempting her to eat of the forbidden fruit, he knew that if she did eat, that she would die. But he said, "thou shalt not surely die," "but thou shalt be as gods; knowing good from evil." Unfortunately for her and the rest of the human family, she listened to what he said, and acted accordingly. Well, there are persons, at the present day, under the influence of the same malignant being. And if we are not constantly on our guard, we shall be liable all the time to be misled by them. Now we would not have you to be so cautious, in this matter, as not to believe any thing that you hear, but we wish simply to impress upon your mind that there are men to whose influence you may be exposed, who expect to get along in the world in no other way than by deception and imposition.

Again, to be successful in life, you must avoid extravagance. Scores of persons are poor and al-

most entirely dependent on others for a support, who might have been in independent circumstances, if they had not scattered profusely what they once possessed. A number of families are to be found, which might now live comfortably upon what they have heretofore wasted in gratifying their extravagant notions. The unnecessary expenditures of some young men would decently and creditably support others, if they had no other income. It is astonishing to see how hard some young persons will labor, how closely they will attend to business, and how foolishly, and for what small trifles they will spend their earnings. They seem not to regard the future, but direct their attention altogether to those things which afford pleasure at the present time.

A few years since, we became intimately acquainted with a young man who was quite wealthy. His father had been quite successful in business, and had secured for himself and family a handsome little fortune, but died when he was comparitively young, and left it all to his children. The portion inherited by the son, to whom we here have reference, amounted to some twelve or fifteen thousand dollars, which by some young persons would be considered quite a fortune. This young man was a noble and generous-hearted man, and was kind and obliging almost to a fault. And in addition to this, he was strictly moral. He would neither swear, break the Sabbath, nor use intoxicating liquors of any kind, and was careful to

avoid most of the vices in which so many young persons indulge to their ruin.

But after all, this young man was extravagant. Especially was he so in regard to dress and traveling equipage. The most fashionable cities of the East could not furnish him with clothing that was too fine, and he was not satisfied if his carriage and horses were not superior, in all respects, to any that could be found in the community in which he lived. We counted in his wardrobe, at one time, some twelve suits of clothing, all fine and nice. Beside this, though he was quite young, he went to the expense of building for himself a splendid palace, and of furnishing it with the most costly furniture which the country could produce; beside various other extravagant notions too tedious to be named.

And what was the result? Why he soon ran through all that he possessed, and was deeply involved in debt. We have not seen him for some years past, but learn from realiable authority that he is hard pressed to get along in the world, and is bound to attend closely to business to meet the ordinary demands of nature. Now if this young man had not indulged to such an extent his propensity to show off in the world, and had taken things more moderately; if he had paid more attention to his real wants, and less to the fashions and customs of the day, he might now be comfortably situated in life, and in a condition to make himself useful to others.

But we must avoid extravagance not only in dress, houses, furniture and such like, but also in business.

Said a distinguished writer on this subject: "A business that yields you a fair saving for future wants is all you ought, at first, to expect; and as it advances, if it affords you full competency and comfort you may rest satisfied that it will meet your reasonable wishes. Rapid prosperity should be sought by no sensible man. Apart from its serious risks, the mind must grow, and life must multiply its sentiments and feelings, before you can reach that degree of human experience, which is essential to large enjoyment. This is a great evil in American mercantile life, indeed, it is a vice of our society. The most of our people strive to crowd enjoyment into their existence ere they have learned to be happy; or reached the age at which it is susceptible of most intensity."

A young gentleman, some years since, engaged in the mercantile business upon a small scale, in the city of L—, and for awhile was very successful. He resolved, however, to operate upon a larger scale; and accordingly rented a fine large business-house, and filled it with the various articles pertaining to his trade. But he soon found that he had enlarged his business to such an extent that he had not sufficient capacity to manage and control it, and that his business was not proportioned to his experience and business qualifications. He soon discovered, also, that his expendi-

tures were considerably larger than his regular income, and that he lacked ability to change this state of things. The result was, he was under the necessity of suspending operations. And on winding up his business, he found himself in debt to the amount of some several thousand dollars.

Then, what we would say to young men is, be frugal in all matters, whether great or small. And especially is this practice necessary in every department of business. Let a man curtail all unnecessary expenses, and take proper care of his earnings, however small, and he will soon be astonished to find himself in possession of all that he needs to supply his real wants. A wealthy merchant of New York, by gathering up all the lucifer matches, which, from time to time, were wasted by his clerks, who were dependent upon him too, for a support, always had enough of that article to supply his own wants, without spending a single farthing.

"The neglect of trifles, as they are called, is suffering a moth to eat holes in your purse, and let out all the profits of your industry. Nothing is more true than the old proverb, 'That a penny saved, is twopence got.' When, therefore, you wrangle for a farthing in a bargain, or refuse to throw it away in sport, do not let fools laugh you out of your economy, but leave them their jest, and keep you your money. * * * Men ought to take care of their means, ought to use them prudently and sparingly, and to keep their ex-

penses always within the bounds of their income, be it what it may."

But again, if we would be successful in life, we must avoid bad company.

Nothing which we have, or can suggest, will more certainly block up the way of a young man, and prevent him from carrying out his worldly plans successfully, than for him to keep bad company. It is more or less true in every case, "that a man is known by the company he keeps." He may be honest in his intentions, just in all his dealings with others; he may have energy, industry, and economy, and may well understand the business or profession in which he is engaged; yet if he associates with men without moral character and standing, men of degraded habits, he will accomplish but little for himself or any one else.

Some bad men endeavor to make others as bad as themselves, for no other consideration than the pleasure it affords them to see that others are as bad as themselves. And if young men associate with such individuals, they are sure to be brought down on a level with them as to standing in society.

"Once abandoned to their influence, you are lost. They will lead you from sin to sin, until you are as highly accomplished in the arts of vice as the worst. Remember, that evil companions will blight in you the delicate flower of innocence, which diffuses itself around youth as a sweet per-

fume." We think we are running no risk, when we say, that it is impossible for a young man to associate, for any length of time, with bad men, without sustaining more or less injury as to character, if he is not led into vice, which will ruin his worldly prospects. The most dangerous character, perhaps, to which we could direct the attention of young men, is the gambler. In the language of Mr. Wise, "he has no principles of honor or integrity, for cheating is his trade. He has no pity. His heart is as adamant. He will fleece his victim of the last penny he has in the world, though he knows the poor dupe has a starving family at home, and will either go forth from his den to become a robber, or to rush unbidden into the presence of his God. He has the body of a man, but the spirit of a devil. It is his meat and his drink, to destroy and ruin his fellow-creatures. Yet this is the man who will greet a young man with smiles and flattery; who will praise his skill, laud his courage, and predict his success at the gambling-table. This is the man to whom silly youths surrender themselves."

In a popular town, in the midst of a wealthy community in the State of Kentucky, lived a young man, who had selected as a business, the practice of law. For a while, he was respected by all who knew him. And there seemed, for a time, to be every indication that he would be successful and do well. But soon it was discovered that he had selected, as his regular associates, the

lowest class of people who lived in the town. He would go to houses of ill fame and equalize himself with those who were without character, without standing, and without common decency itself. And would, sometimes, dissipate and carouse with this class of persons until a late hour at night. As these facts came to light among the people, he was no longer respected by them. For a time afterward, he attended the bar of justice regularly as a jurist, but no one paid any special attention to him. Gentlemen of his own profession passed him by in silence. And very soon it might be seen that every respectable lady and gentleman were disposed to avoid his company whenever it was possible for them to do so.

Whenever a young man begins to keep bad company, he soon begins to neglect his regular business. And if this is neglected, it will soon run down. And besides this, as a young man begins to fail in business, the people begin to lose confidence in him, and in a short time, he will be astonished to find himself out of business and destitute of friends. If a young man associates with the abandoned and licentious, it will be impossible for him to keep up the impression, in the minds of the people, that he is a person of integrity. "By mixing with such persons, he loses his character and virtue too. For on becoming familiar with vice, he soon ceases to hate it, and if he ceases to hate it, he will learn both to love and practice it."

Then, we say to all young persons, in the language of one who had weighed these matters well, "select for your companions, persons as carefully educated, and as honestly disposed as yourself; such as are known and esteemed; whose pursuits are laudable; whose lives are temperate, and whose expenses are moderate. With such companions as these, you can neither contract discredit, nor degenerate into excess; you would be a mutual check to each other; and your reputation would be so established, that it would be the ambition of others to be admitted members of your society."

Again, energy and industry are necessary in order to success in life.

But as much has been said on these two points by different writers, and as their importance, as elements of success in life, are generally admitted by all persons, however limited their experience and observation, we think it unnecessary to spend much time in arguing the necessity of either.

If a young man would reach any desirable end in life, he must expect first to overcome many obstacles, and to grapple with many formidable difficulties. And if he does not employ all the energy which he possesses, he is sure to meet with disappointment at the last.

Men are too much inclined, of late days, to attribute their ill success in life to their misfortunes, or to an unfavorable combination of circumstances; and to argue, that if it had not been for this or the other "mishap," they would have

accomplished this or the other desirable object, when, really, the whole difficulty in their case is, a want of energy. They look around among their successful neighbors and say, this man is the child of fortune; that man has been lucky all his life; and of the third, he has had the most favorable opportunities to get along in the world that could be desired; for every plan that he devises seems to work well, and every thing to which he turns his hand, prospers beyond all expectation; when, really, the philosophy of the whole matter is, in regard to those lucky or fortunate individuals, that they are men of untiring energy. Here lies the great secret of their success.

"If any young man desires a confirmation of these ideas, let him carefully study the history of every man who has written his name on the wall of the temple of fame. Let him view such minds in their *progress* toward greatness. He will see them rising, step by step, in the face of stubborn difficulties, which gave way before them only because their courage would not be daunted, nor their energy wearied. He will find no exception in the history of mankind. Supine, powerless souls have always fainted before hostile circumstances, and sank beneath their opportunities; while men of power have wrestled, with sublime vigor, against all opposing men and things, and obtained success because they would not be defeated."

But you should remember that energy, without prudence, may degenerate into rashness, and this last may precipitate us, with all our plans, hopes and prospects, into ruin. Rashness has been the ruin of thousands of individuals who were not lacking for energy. They were too hasty. They would not give their own thoughts time to mature, nor their own plans and arrangements time to work out, successfully, the object which they had in view. Such persons are always grasping eagerly after the desired object before they are in reach of it, and the consequence is, they miss their aim. While we struggle manfully "against all opposing men and things," with a determination never to be conquered, or to give up the contest, we should always act with calmness and deliberation.

It is not always the man who travels fastest that will get to his journey's end soonest. He who travels steadily, and always in the right direction, is the man who will generally make the "best time." Said one of the seven Grecian philosophers, "the more haste the less speed." That man who is actuated in his movements by the mere impulse of the moment, without foresight or proper regard to circumstances, is not apt to secure the most desirable ends in life.

But, then, we are to be industrious as well as energetic. We should learn habits of industry in the days of our youth. Hundreds of persons let the "prime of life" pass away in idleness, and,

in their declining days are under the necessity of laboring and toiling for the means of subsistence; when, if they had spent their younger days in following, industriously, some trade or profession, their latter days might have been spent pleasantly to themselves, and profitably to others. The idler never can be a happy man. It is contrary to the laws of nature and the rules of sound philosophy. "It is a law of the human constitution, that mankind shall find their happiness and their development in action. And it were as easy to grasp the forked lightning, or to stay the fiery waves of the volcano, as to contravene this law."

The idea prevails, to a considerable extent at the present day, among many young men, that labor, of any kind, is dishonorable; and so deeply is this idea riveted upon their minds, that they are ashamed to be found following the plow, pushing the plane, or engaged in any other laborious employment. Such views ought to be treated with contempt by every honest and industrious man; for nothing, it seems to us, can be more honorable than to see him honestly following some mechanical, agricultural, or professional pursuit, that he may be enabled, thereby, to supply the wants of himself and family. But it is unnecessary to argue a point already settled by the voice of inspiration. The language of the Bible, as expressed to man, is, "Let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth."

Idleness is the forerunner of shame and poverty. That youth, while his parents care for him, and make provision for the regular supply of his wants, may not realize, at the time, the necessity of industrious habits; but when he arrives at that point where all depends upon his own efforts, he will feel the sad results of indulging in habits of idleness. This is forcibly illustrated by the case of a young man who attended a course of lectures at the Medical University in the city of Louisville, some years since. During the course of lectures now referred to, it was our privilege, most of the time, to be in attendance. This young man was the son of wealthy parents, who lived in one of the Southern States; and, we suppose, from his conduct during the time that we had an opportunity of noticing his course, that he was raised up in idleness. Be this as it may, he spent his time in idleness during his stay in Louisville; at least so far as we could see or hear, after paying somewhat particular attention to his case. During lecture hours he might be seen throwing paper balls at the rest of the students, or putting himself into the most awkward positions that he could possibly assume, that he might attract their attention, and cause them to laugh. And if not thus employed, he was out promenading the streets, or engaged in some childish amusement.

Be it remembered, too, that he belonged to that class of students who expected to graduate at the close of the session. The time for conferring the

degree of M. D., upon those who were found worthy, soon arrived; and the amphitheater was crowded to overflowing with spectators to witness the ceremonies. The second class students, (those who had attended two courses of lectures,) having passed a creditable examination before the professors of the institution, were all in their places, neatly dressed, and in fine spirits. But where is our idler during this time, who formerly belonged to this class? He sits just back of his former classmates, observed by the entire audience, covered with confusion, his feelings deeply mortified, from the fact that he had just been rejected by the unanimous consent of the medical faculty, on account of his idleness during lecture hours, and his inattention to books during the hours for regular study. We leave the young reader to imagine the feelings of this young man on that occasion.

Here we see the importance of industry, as a means of success in life. While idleness leads to poverty, wretchedness, and, generally to a life of immorality and licentiousness, industry leads to a rich and ample harvest, as to wealth, and to an honorable and desirable position in the best classes of society.

Finally, "above every thing else, you should remember, that success in life is vitally connected with your own moral growth and improvement, by means of patient, faithful self-culture. A man has no power like power over himself. It is

power to discipline his faculties, to govern his passions, to control his tastes, to form his nature to immortal excellence and joy. He can not act on the outer world as on himself. Mountains may be tunnelled, and oceans diminished to lakes. Inventions may apply all science, and art may fill the earth with its triumphs; but man lifts himself high above these humble things, and rises to the dignity of divine companionship. Rich in a plenitude of gifts, and commanding all the resources of the universe to bless and ennoble, how few feel that Omnipotence waits at their side to attend them in their ascending pathway! The saddest spectacle of the world is the dead souls around us. Dead they are—dead in intellect, hope, heart,—dead to humanity, home, God. See their footsteps! The grass withers and the flowers perish before them. See their foreheads! The sunshine is cold and pale upon them. The worms of the grave crawl over their hearts, and they dwell among the habitations of death, as the hideous skeleton of men departed."

LECTURE XI.

EVIDENCES OF THE TRUTH OF CHRISTIANITY.

If Christianity is founded upon a system of truth, and is, therefore, of Divine origin; we should not only believe in its doctrines, but live in the daily practice of its precepts. But, if it is founded upon a well-arranged system of falsehoods, we should investigate the matter, until such falsehoods are discovered, brought to light, and exposed to the view of all men. We should never reject its claims, however, until we have the most positive evidence of its being "a cunningly devised fable." And as there has been much labor, research, and close investigation, upon the part of the opponents of Christianity, in the last eighteen hundred years, to establish the latter proposition upon the kind of evidence just named, and as they have thus far failed in every attempt to do so, with any degree of satisfaction, even to themselves, it may be taken as a positive assurance that such a proposition never can be established.

In fact, so many fruitless attempts have been made to disprove the truth of Christianity, that we are a little inclined to doubt the sincerity of the man who professes to disbelieve its truth, and, from that consideration, to reject its claims.

Among all the subjects which have been, or may be presented to our minds, and claim our attention, none can be more important than this. For it affects alike our present and eternal well-being. All men, and especially the young, should have clear views, not only of the doctrines of Christianity, but of the grounds upon which we are under obligations to believe them.

For if we are lacking upon either of these points, however well established our own minds may be in regard to the truths of Christianity, as revealed in the Bible, we shall be very much annoyed by those who make it a point, whenever the opportunity offers itself, to endeavor to shake the faith of all who do not oppose, and abuse Christianity as they do.

If the reader is not aware of it, he should be, that there is, in almost every portion of this country, a class of men generally denominated infidels, or skeptics, whose object seems to be to bring into disrepute the character of Christianity, of its teachers and adherents; and are endeavoring to induce the world to believe, that all who profess to be governed by its pure precepts, as set forth in the Bible, are a set of hypocrites; that they are trying to deceive the people, that they may be able to accomplish some evil design.

The worst feature in the case of those who are aiming to make this false impression, is, that they are aiming to do so, not by fair and logical reasoning; not by any attempt upon their part to

establish what they say as being true, for they know that this can not be done, but by attempting to get all who will listen to them, and especially the young, to believe that Christianity is a system of priestcraft, from beginning to end; its teachers impostors, and their followers a bigoted, narrow-minded "set," who deserve no confidence whatever.

At the same time, these skeptics claim to be candid, liberal in their sentiments, and entirely free from any thing like prejudice. They try very hard to make the impression that their minds are unbiased by any improper sentiments, or any selfish feeling. They are so much in the habit of urging their opinions, and repeating their false insinuations, that those who believe in Christianity are very apt, if they do not make themselves familiar with the character of such men, to be deceived by them; and will admit the charge they make against Christians, and their unjust claim to candor and liberality.

Never allow yourself to be misled by this class of men. For, to say the least of them, they are incapable of giving instruction to the young or to any one else, in the great science of Christianity, from the fact that they have paid but little attention to it, and know but little about it. If you will observe closely, you will soon discover that this class of men have never examined the evidences of the truth of the Christian religion. They are either afraid, or have no inclination to

do so. And here is the great secret of their opposition. If they would pay proper attention to the subject, they would soon see its importance to themselves and others. They would be convinced that it is of divine origin, would yield to its claims, and cease to oppose. But they seem to dread the light which might be elicited by investigation, as the hooting night-bird dreads the light of the midday sun. They carefully avoid every thing calculated to give them correct views of Christianity, and read and study such books only as have a tendency to confirm them more fully in the principles of infidelity.

If the subject was not too grave in its character, one might be amused to see with what eagerness they catch at every thing which they suppose will weaken confidence in the truth of the Christian religion, and establish the false positions which they have assumed.

Very few of the class of men, here referred to, may be said to be men of intellectual and acquired abilities. A large majority of them are quite destitute of general information. "The grounds on which skeptics build their disbelief of Christianity are commonly very slight. The number is comparatively few whose opinions are the result of any tolerable degree of investigation." It is that class of infidels, too, who know the least, who generally make the greatest noise, and do the most harm.

They seem to delight in doing all in their power

to counteract the efforts which are made to disseminate the pure principles of Christianity among the people, and to destroy its influence upon their minds. And when they fail, as they generally do among those who are tolerably well-informed, they seem to get out of humor, and to become disgusted at the conduct of all who will not believe and act as they do. Such men very rarely make an attack upon those who have investigated the evidences of the truth of Christianity, and are prepared thereby to defend themselves. They know too well the result which may be looked for in such cases. Their efforts most commonly refer to the young who have had but little time and but few opportunities to qualify themselves to resist the influence of their false and dangerous doctrines.

We well remember an instance in our own history, which may serve to illustrate the truth of this last statement.

When about seventeen years of age, having been a member of the church, and a professor of religion for several years, we were in the habit of visiting, quite frequently, the family of a gentleman who lived but a mile or so from where we were raised. He was a professed infidel in his notions, and seemed to hate the Bible "with a cruel hatred," and did all that he could, from time to time, to shake our confidence in the Christian religion. We now look back and remember, with horror, the profane language which he used, the pains which he took, and the time he spent in

trying to infuse into our minds the poison of infidelity. But we rejoice in our hearts that he failed to accomplish his wicked design.

And now will the young reader believe it when he is told that this gentleman, though some forty years of age, could not read the Bible, and that he was comparatively a stranger to the doctrines of Christianity, as taught therein? These are but the facts in his case. He stayed away from all places of public worship, except when he occasionally went as a matter of curiosity to himself. He carefully avoided every thing calculated to inspire the mind with proper sentiments in regard to the Christian religion.

How many young men, just at this period in their history have been ruined by the pernicious example and influence of just such men! These are the men, who, most of all, should be dreaded, and their movements watched by the young men of this country. They may point you to that minister of the gospel, and to the conduct of this member of the church. They may abuse, in unmeasured terms, this and the other doctrine taught in the Bible. But we say to all young men, keep your eye steadily fixed upon that man, and guard well against his influence, who, in the middle of the nineteenth century, when revelation, science, and all nature are throwing their unmistakable light upon his pathway, calls in question the truth of revealed religion. That religion which has given comfortable hope to thousands

and millions in the extremes of misfortune and in the dying hour, and is destined finally to enlighten and save the world. For their object is to lead you along, step by step, in the labyrinthian path of unbelief, until you have adopted their sentiments, and are confirmed in the principles of infidelity.

And if they should succeed in their attempt, how wretched would be your condition? We might then exclaim, in the language of Smith, "Is this a spectacle which it is possible for any human being to behold with indifference? A young man standing on the threshhold of life, and just going into all the business of the world, with a heart in which every principle of right and wrong is thoroughly shaken and impaired. If not destined for great offices in life, yet he is a brother, a son, a friend; he is to be a husband and a father of children; some must trust him, and some must love him. Call it bigotry, and cover these notions with mockery and derision; but I say it would be better for this young man, that the work of death were going on within him, that the strength and the roses of his youth were fading away, and that he were wasting down to the tombs of his ancestors, wept by his friends, and pitied by the world."

Whatever may be thought of this language, by others, we have no doubt as to the correctness of the position here assumed by the author.

It has long been to us a matter of astonishment, why any reflecting man should be opposed to the doctrines of the Christian religion. For if its prin-

ciples are founded upon a system of falsehoods throughout, in its practical influence and final results, it can not in the least injure its adherents, however strictly its precepts may be obeyed.

What does Christianity purpose? It finds man in ignorance, trying to feel his way, as it were, in the darkness of error and superstition. He is ignorant alike of his origin, present condition, and future destiny. Infidelity, with all its boasted wisdom, leaves him in the dark. But Christianity bursts asunder the involving clouds of darkness and reveals man to himself. It finds him in pursuit of happiness, seeking for something that will remove the burden from, and impart peace to his troubled mind. He has sought for it in wealth, worldly fame, honor, the friendship of the world, and in the society of the great and the wise, but all in vain. Here, again, infidelity offers no relief, points to no remedy. But Christianity directs him to a fountain where sin may be washed away, to a power which will remove the burden from his mind, and now he is at peace with his Creator, with himself, and with all the world beside.

It finds him in a world of affliction, vexation, disappointment and sorrow, without a single ray of hope as to the future. And if he appeals to infidelity in his misfortunes, it points him to morality, to a set of rules without authority, and, to say the least of them, doubtful in their practical influence and tendency. And when he looks to

the end of his journey, all is still, dark and gloomy. But Christianity throws its light beyond the darkness of the tomb, and draws aside the vail that intervenes between us and the invisible world, and all is as light as day. It says, "bear with patience and fortitude the evils which may for a time afflict you. Walk in my ways of pleasantness and peace, and soon you shall live where death never comes, and where you shall enjoy unalloyed happiness forever."

We ask, then, in view of these facts, why oppose Christianity? For if its promises all fail in regard to the future, it certainly betters the condition of man in this life, in every sense of the word. Infidelity says, that Christianity is a fable, without giving you the slightest evidence of the truth of such a declaration, and at the same time, makes no promise which reaches beyond the present state of existence. But Christianity elevates man's condition here, both in a temporal and spiritual point of view, reveals to him the joys of a future world, and promises more than the mind, with its present limited information can conceive of. "Which," then, "is the more commendable and noble, to believe in Christianity without proof, or to disbelieve in it without proof? A modest coincidence with received opinions, above our faculties, or an affected contempt of them? * * * And," we ask, "if it is not afflicting to behold that depraved appetite for misery and despair which induces men to yield up their assent to a

system of incredulity, without being acquainted in the smallest degree with the reasons on which it is founded."

No man should oppose Christianity, or seek to undermine its influence, though he may not believe its teachings. For in so doing, he is resisting the force of evidence, where there is every reason that he should be convinced. He ought to rejoice when he finds himself thoroughly routed and refuted; that some one has at last convinced him of his error, and showed him a better way.

Let all young persons remember that the path traveled by infidels is truly dark and rugged. Infidelity fills the mind with doubts and the most gloomy apprehensions, has nothing good to confer upon us at present, and leaves us in despair, because it can promise us nothing which relates to the future. The future is shrouded in darkness to the mind of that man, who has closed his eyes against the light of revelation. It is all a mystery to his mind, and must remain so as long as he remains in unbelief.

The object which we have in view, then, in presenting for your consideration, a few of the plain evidences of the truth of Christianity, is to convince you that the reverse of this is true when applied to the Christian religion. And now, if your mind is already tinged with the poison of infidelity, if you are, to some extent, prejudiced against Christianity as a system of divine revelation, or against any of its doctrines, if those against

whose influence we wish to guard you, have, in any degree, induced you to disbelieve the teachings of the Bible, we hope that, while you read what follows on this subject, you will lay all such things aside, that you will examine carefully what is said, and be fully prepared, when through, to give a correct decision.

We notice first, as evidence of its truth, that Christianity sets forth nothing which is contrary to the teachings of nature, or of natural history, or to any principle of natural science or philosophy.

Let us examine this proposition briefly, but carefully. We take the ground that the Author of nature is, also, the author of revelation. But if there is a want of agreement between the book of nature, as it is called, and the Bible, our position would be wrong. But we contend that no such a disagreement has been, or can be found, and that, therefore, our position is right. If you were to discover in your observations of natural things, something in the nature, disposition, or movements of animate or inanimate beings which positively contradicts some plain declaration of the Bible, you might then begin to doubt. But you may look in vain for such a contradiction. Infidelity has already tried its strength upon this proposition by searching nature, history, and science, but as yet, they are unable to find one single contradiction. That page of history is yet to be written, and that discovery in science is yet to be made, which will bring to light some fact, about which, the inspired

authors of the Bible were mistaken, when they made their declaration in regard to it.

We will illustrate this point more fully. It is said in the Book of Psalms, "Thou makest darkness, and it is night, wherein all the beasts of the forest do creep forth. The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat from God. The sun ariseth, they gather themselves together, and lay them down in their dens. Man goeth forth to his labor," etc. And do the beasts creep forth at night? Do the young lions roar after their prey? And when the sun "ariseth," do they gather themselves together in their dens. If not, the Bible is at fault, from the fact, that its authors have made declarations in regard to the habits of animals, which are at variance with the facts in the case. But if the habits of these animals are such as are here described, there is no disagreement between the declaration of the Psalmist, and the plainest declarations of profane historians.

Well, we remark here, that every incidental allusion to natural things, upon the part of the sacred writers, has been, from time to time, carefully and critically examined by infidels, to see if they could discover any thing which fails to correspond with facts now admitted by all. But, as already remarked, no such discovery has ever been made. And we defy the infidel world, not only to show, but to find a single instance of the kind. Now we are aware that it may be said, that there is nothing extraordinary in giving a correct account

of things with which the mind is perfectly familiar, and, therefore, it is not strange that the sacred writers, in alluding to natural things, have made no mistakes. But we ask, is it so with other writers of natural history? We answer, that it is not so in any case whatever. And you have but to examine the writings of profane authors, who professed and really desired to give a plain detail of facts in regard to things with which they were acquainted, to realize the truth of this statement.

And how will infidelity account for the difference, in this respect, between sacred and profane authors? It can be accounted for in but one way, and that is, one class wrote under the immediate direction of an infinitely-wise Being, and the other did not.

There is, also, an exact agreement between the teachings of Christianity and natural science. And to our minds, this is irresistible evidence of its truth. And we particularly wish the young reader to pay special attention to the investigation of this proposition.

At the close of the eighteenth century, all the sciences were arrayed against Christianity. The object was, to show that the sacred writers had set forth, as being true, that which is false, according to well-established principles, in the different branches of natural science. Well, if they had succeeded in this undertaking, it would have been positive proof that the authors of the Bible

were not inspired men. Infidelity was wide awake, and all its votaries busily engaged, and were determined, if possible, to demonstrate beyond a doubt, and that, too, upon scientific principles, that the Bible was at fault. From the fact, as they said, that declarations are made therein, which contradict some of the plainest facts brought to light by scientific investigation, now read and known by all men. For awhile, it seemed that victory would perch upon their banners. And the chant of triumph might already be heard along the ranks of infidelity. There was a general jubilee among all the opposers and haters of Christianity.

But their day of jubilee, with its disgusting ceremonies, was a premature affair. For scarcely had the sound of the first shouts of victory died away in the distance, before another flash of light from the temple of science revealed the absolute absurdity of every position which had been assumed by the advocates of infidelity. For, be it remembered, that the advocates of Christianity were not idle spectators of the movements that were being made by the infidel at this time. They were preparing to meet those who were trying to undermine one of the strong holds of the Christian religion, upon their own ground. And to show that they had set forth as facts in science, that which was false to all intents and purpose.

Having investigated these matters to their sat-

isfaction, the teachers of religion came forth with the Bible in one hand, and the book of science in the other, and challenged the infidel world to come forward and show wherein one was at variance with the other. The strongest, and those best acquainted with the developments of science, in the ranks of infidelity, were sent forth to point out this difference, if such difference could be found. But all to no purpose. For it soon became manifest that infidelity had made another "glorious" failure. Infidels themselves soon discovered that their geological, chemical, and astronomical investigations had all been in vain, and worse than vain. For they saw that the adherents of Christianity had turned them all to their own advantage, by showing that every new discovery made by scientific investigation was but another evidence of the truth of the Christian religion.

That the young reader may have an idea of the turns which are sometimes taken against Christianity by its opponents, we will give a simple illustration of what has just been said.

It is said in the Bible, substantially, that Joshua, upon a certain occasion, commanded the sun to stand still, that he might have time to accomplish, more fully, the design of that Being, in whose service he was engaged. It is said, also, that the sun obeyed the command, and stood still.

Well, a few years since, infidel astronomers, from this circumstance, endeavored to show that Joshua was a fool or something worse, as evinced

by his giving this command. "For," said they, "it is evident from astronomical investigation, that the sun has been stationary in the heavens ever since it was first placed there by the fiat of Jehovah. And, therefore, Joshua could not have been an inspired man, for as such, he could not have made such a gross mistake."

For awhile, this proposition seemed to be unanswerable. And to many, it was conclusive evidence that Joshua, and all the rest of the sacred writers had combined together to impose upon the rest of mankind. In the mean time the lamp of science was still shining with a brilliant light, throwing its rays more directly upon every object in the natural world.

And by this light, Christian, as well as infidel astronomers, soon made the discovery that the sun does move upon its own axis, and controls, in its movements, the entire solar system. That, in other words, it is the great wheel, in the machinery of our solar system, by which an all-wise Being moves all the rest. And now, when we remember that Joshua did not understand the principles of astronomy, as taught and understood at the present day, and yet, that in referring to things pertaining to that science, he spake with philosophical accuracy when he said to the sun stand still; how can we come to any other conclusion than that his mind, at the time, was controlled by the direct agency of that Being who is perfectly familiar with the existence and move-

ments of every thing in the universe? It seems to us that there is no possible chance to resist the force of this conclusion, or to show that it is incorrect. Infidels themselves have long since abandoned the ground, in regard to this matter, which they once assumed with such an air of triumph.

The illustration which we have given will hold good, not only in the science of astronomy, but in every particular branch of science that might be named. So much so, that whenever any man of science starts out to make some new discovery in nature; to see if there is not some spot unexplored, or some principle, the character of which is not fully understood, you may confi dently look for the development of some fact which will more fully establish the truth of the Christian religion.

If you will take up a book which treats of science, you will find almost an endless variety of mistakes. Take, for example, a work on chemistry; and if it has been published over two or three years, you will find that nearly one-half the statements which it contains have been demonstrated to be wrong by more recent and reliable investigations.

But while this is true of all other books, it is not true of the Bible. There are copies of this book which we *know* to be a hundred years old. We know, also, that it contains history, natural and mental philosophy, chemistry and astronomy.

And yet, after the most critical examination of all its parts, from beginning to end, and that, too, by those who despised its teachings, no mistake, as to doctrines or science, has ever been found. And yet we are bound to admit, from facts which are indisputable, that there is more learning and scientific knowledge at the present day than there was a century ago. Now, in view of these facts, we ask, why is it that men can not be as accurate now in what they write as they were who wrote the Bible? The facilities afforded for acquiring knowledge at the present day, are equal to those of any other period; and men are naturally as honest now as they ever were. Why, then, do we find such a variety of mistakes in all their writings? There can be but one correct answer given to this important question, and that is, those who wrote the Bible were directed by infinite wisdom what to say, and how to say it, while those who write at the present day have no such direction.

We notice, in the next place, as evidence of the truth of Christianity, that men of the highest order of talents, whose minds are well stored with literary and scientific knowledge, have, after close investigation of the subject, acknowledged its truth.

This is true, not only of practical believers in Christianity, but of those, also, who pay but little attention to its precepts.

Now, this may not strike the mind of the young

reader as it does ours; for we must acknowledge that we can find no way by which we can resist its influence upon our minds. Look, for instance, at those who, in their sentiments and feelings, are favorable to Christianity. They are men, many of them, of unblemished characters in society. No one would, for a moment, call in question the truth of any declaration which they might make affecting their temporal interest. They have been tried at every point, on various occasions, and under different circumstances, and have proved themselves to be men, not only of sound judgment, but of honest hearts. They are capable of deciding correctly any question which may be presented to their minds, and can tell immediately on which side the weight of evidence lies. In a word, they are men of deep learning, patient research, and of historical and scientific information; and yet they tell us, that after close investigation of all that has been presented to their minds, both for and against the truth of Christianity, they are perfectly satisfied that it is divine in its origin.

Now, it is difficult for us to conceive how these men can be entirely honest in their declarations and decisions about other things, and intentionally misrepresent the case in matters of more importance to themselves and others. In fact, we are bound to believe that they are not only honest, but correct in their decisions. And if these things are so, they speak loudly in favor of the reception

of Christianity, as a system of divine truth, upon the part of every individual.

Furthermore, upon this point, among those who make no pretensions to the practice of religion, in any shape or form, we hear the same decision; men, too, who feel no interest in its behalf, and have no desire for it to prosper on the one hand, or to be checked in its progress on the other. If, then, men of the most cultivated minds, fully able to investigate this subject thoroughly, and to view it in all its bearings, have decided that Christianity is no cunningly-devised fable, what shall we say of those who still refuse to believe? We must say that they manifest a degree of inconsistency that can be found nowhere else. For they can believe men to be honest in their business transactions, honest in politics, honest in all their pretensions and movements before the world, where there is much to induce them to be otherwise, and can believe them to be dishonest, where their highest and best interests go to show that they should be perfectly honest.

Now, let the young reader weigh candidly what has been said upon this point, and especially the sentiment contained in the last paragraph, and he will see how unreasonable are many of the positions assumed by professed infidels.

Another evidence of the truth of Christianity, which we will notice before we close this lecture, is that infidels, after all their efforts, have failed to establish any thing to the contrary.

For more than eighteen hundred and fifty years, the infidel world has been trying to prove that the inspired authors of the New Testament were a set of impostors, and their doctrines and precepts a forgery. And, at the present day, the probability of success, in this undertaking, is a thousandfold less than when they first made the attempt. In fact, there are so many circumstances, so many incontestable facts, which go to establish the truth of what is said in the New Testament scriptures, that men, as a general thing, are becoming quite careless about the investigation of any thing where the object is to prove the contrary.

Infidels have had sufficient time and opportunities, if it was possible for it to be done, to show that Christianity is false, in all its pretensions, from beginning to end. But history, science, reason and experience are all against them, and boldly declare all the time, notwithstanding that they have been abused, twisted and tortured by the advocates of infidelity, that Christianity is of God. It matters not to what source infidelity may look to find something to support their sinking cause, and to enable them to carry their point, they are sure to meet with disappointment.

"The loftiest pretensions of learning and philosophy, the most malignant arts of wit, satire, scurrility have been employed against the Christian religion in vain. What malevolent effort has been put forth for its annihilation? Kings, and emperors, and generals, philosophers, states-

men and legislators have all aimed at its extirpation." And have tried, in vain, to pull down the strong pillars which support the noble and lofty fabric of Christianity; but they have found it to be immovable; and the infidel world may try again and again, and still they will fail; for it is founded upon truth, and that truth shall never fail while time itself endures.

Let it be remembered, too, that among those who have so violently opposed Christianity, are to be found men of intelligence, general information, and of extensive investigation. Men, too, of sound judgment, deep thought, and keen penetration. These men, having neglected the evidences of Christianity, have bent all their energies against its claims. It would really seem that if Christianity was at fault, that such men would surely make the discovery. As belonging to the class of men just described, we may name Diderot, the French philosopher, Morgan, Tindal, Gibbon, Voltaire, Hobbs, Bolingbroke, Hume, Rousseau and Thomas Paine.

These men, justly celebrated for their learning, ingenuity, and talents, put forth their best efforts, and spent their lives in trying to show that Christianity was a deep-laid scheme to impose upon the credulity of the human family, but failed entirely, after putting forth all their strength. They, with thousands more of the adversaries of the Christian religion, have long since been entombed, and many of them forgotten, but still the religion of the

Bible continues to flourish, and from present indications, its prospects to spread throughout the world were never more flattering than at the present time.

And now, young reader, in view of what has been said, how can you come to any other conclusion than that the Christian religion is divine in its origin? We have seen that history, science, and learning, as well as the ingenuity of distinguished philosophers, have been tested to the utmost of their strength, to see if some fact could not be brought to light to silence the advocates of the truth of Christianity; but nothing of the kind has ever yet been found. "There is not, in all the world, a single particle of evidence against the claim of Christianity to be divine in its origin." We close this lecture in the language of the poet:

> "What none can prove a forgery may be true;
> What none but bad men wish exploded, must."

LECTURE XII.

THE BIBLE A DIVINE REVELATION.

In the lecture which precedes this, our remarks were somewhat general. This could not well be avoided, as we wished to embrace in our remarks several ideas which could not well be arranged under any separate or distinct proposition. This we will avoid, as well as we can, in the present lecture.

Christianity, as a system, stands or falls with the Bible. Hence we design noticing, in this lecture, some of the evidences that the Bible is a revelation of the will of God. This has long been a contested point between Christians and infidels, the Christian maintaining that those who wrote the Bible, were inspired men, while infidels contend that they were not. In other words, the infidel contends that there is not sufficient evidence of the truth of the Bible to justify any man in believing it to be a revelation from God, or in adhering strictly to its teachings. We think differently, and shall try to prove the contrary, to the satisfaction of the reader.

The Bible, notwithstanding the scoffs of infidelity, seems to have such clear evidence of its truth, is so well corroborated by ancient profane historians, and is so fully established by various circumstances in the world, that if we did not now believe in its truth, we should be compelled to believe in it after an examination of the evidences of that truth. And we can not see how any man can disbelieve, after such an examination, unless he is determined not to believe, although he may

find the most positive evidence of his error, in refusing to do so.

As a young man, you may have paid but little attention to this subject. You may already be under the influence of strong prejudices against the Bible, and may have adopted, without consideration, some infidel notions. Be this as it may; we are well satisfied that if you will examine, with care, the evidences of the inspiration of the Scriptures, you will be able to adopt the language of Bishop Watson in one of his letters to Thomas Paine, where he says: "With a mind weary of conjecture, fatigued by doubt, sick of disputation, eager for knowledge, anxious for certainty, and unable to attain by the best use of my reason in matters of the utmost importance, I have long ago turned my thoughts to an impartial examination of the proof on which revealed religion is grounded, *and I am convinced of its truth.*"

A great many young men are so situated in life, that they almost necessarily hear a great many low and abusive remarks made about the Bible, and the doctrines it contains. And although, at first, they may be surprised at such remarks, and think them entirely out of place, as well as any thing else which may be urged against the truth of the Bible, their confidence in that truth will finally be shaken, if they are not very much on their guard. And this, not because of any logical and powerful argument against the truth of the Bible, but because they have been listening to statements made by men who hate the Bible, and have neglected to notice the purity of the doctrine it contains, and the positive evidence of its truth.

Thousands of young men imbibe the principles of infidelity without a moment's reflection as to the impropriety of doing so. Without ever once thinking of the sad results of such principles,

when once the the intellectual and moral powers are brought fully under their influence. And if they were called upon to state precisely the grounds upon which they reject the teachings of the Bible, they would be wholly unable to bring forward any thing to justify them in pursuing the course they do.

To prevent young men from adopting infidel sentiments, which have already ruined so many, is the object which we have in view in presenting, for their consideration, some of the plain and positive evidences of the truth of the Bible.

One of the evidences that the Bible is a revelation of the will of God, is the exact agreement between its teachings and the universal experience of mankind, or the correct representation which the Bible gives of man in every respect whatever.

The sacred writers represent all men as being in the same fallen state throughout the world; as being prone to reject that which is good, and to do that which is evil. They teach that man is disposed to follow the evil inclinations of his own heart, to give way to his natural appetites and passions, even when he is well convinced that such a course is wrong. They tell us, also, that all who have not realized the saving influence of divine grace upon their hearts, are dissatisfied; that for such "there is no peace," but that all is disquietude, anxiety, and misery; that in the mind of all, in this situation, there is a void which the world can never fill.

And now, we ask, does this description correspond with the actual experience of men at the present day? Is this a correct representation of man's condition in a moral point of view? No one can deny or doubt its correctness.

Let it be remembered, that when many of the sacred writers gave us their description of man's

condition morally, and said, among other things, that his heart is desperately wicked, inclined to evil, "and only evil, and that continually," that they were acquainted with but very few of the inhabitants of the earth, and yet they lay down a rule which fits every case. "How could they know that in some distant, and then unknown part of the earth, another primitive pair might not have been created, from whom an innocent race of human beings were then descending?" Or how could they know that the whole human family would correspond, in their natural dispositions, with those with whom they were acquainted, except by the immediate inspiration of God?

"If a pure race of human beings had anywhere been found on earth, it would have been a direct contradiction to the Scriptures." But they are all in the same state precisely, which is so forcibly described by the sacred writers, which proves, beyond a doubt, that they were divinely inspired, as "a knowledge of the fact was beyond the reach of man."

One way, then, to decide as to the truth of the Bible, is to refer to our own experience. If it contains any thing contrary to our experience, in regard to our condition in a moral point of view, then it must be at fault; but if not, it must be what it purports to be, a revelation from God. And as infidels themselves can find nothing to the contrary, and as our own experience confirms its truth, we are bound, in justice, to come to the latter conclusion. "Here we become intimate with the germs of vice; and there is no character but may see, as an infallible mirror, his true state here depicted. It is emphatically the book of the human heart, and could only be written by him who is conversant with all the thoughts and devices within us."

Another evidence of the truth of the Bible, is the fulfillment of its prophecies.

"Some of which were speedily fulfilled, others are in process of fulfillment to this day. Thus Christ foretold that he should be put to death in Jerusalem; that he must there suffer many things of the elders, and chief priests, and scribes; that they would condemn him to death, and deliver him to the Gentiles, to mock, and scourge, and crucify him; that the man who dipped his hand with him in the same dish, should betray him into their power; that the rest of his disciples would forsake him that night, and one of them deny him thrice; that he should be crucified; that he would rise again the third day; that he would meet his disciples in Galilee; that, after his ascension, the Holy Spirit should descend on them at Jerusalem; that miraculous powers should thenceforth be possessed and exercised by them; that Jerusalem should be besieged and taken, and the temple entirely destroyed before all them then born were dead; that the city should be trodden under foot of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled; and that his gospel should universally spread, and his kingdom triumph over all opposition. Most of these were strikingly fulfilled before that generation passed away; others are in process of glorious accomplishment at the present day."—*Evidences of Chris.*, page 167.

We might notice various other prophecies which relate to Babylon and Jerusalem, to different persons and places, and especially those which relate to the Savior of the world, but as the circumstances of their fulfillment have been well illustrated by able writers, whose works are extant, we think it unnecessary, as the reader doubtless has access to many such works.

He will allow us, however, to make one other short extract, which relates to a prediction of Moses in regard to the Jews, as recorded in Deut. xxviii: 25—"The Lord shall cause thee to be smitten before thine enemies; and thou shalt be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth." Said Mr. Watson, in his conversations, "Now remember that this prophecy was uttered more than three thousand years ago, and yet, to this day, the Jews are found in the four quarters of the earth, and scarcely any considerable place in the whole civilized world is without them; so that the two facts are before us, that they are 'removed out of their own land, and are scattered into all the kingdoms of the earth.' In vain would you look for the contemporary nations of former times. They, also, were, at different times, largely scattered into different countries by wars, captivities, deportations, but they have been long lost in the mass. The Jews alone remain, distinct and visible as ever, the monuments of the truth of the prophetic spirit, and of the divine commission of their great Lawgiver."

Another evidence of the Bible is, that the sacred writers wrought miracles by way of confirming the truth of what they said.

"A miracle is an event varying from the established course of nature; wrought by the interposition of God himself, in attestation of some divine truth, or of the authority of some divine messenger or teacher. It is generally accompanied with a previous notice, that is performed according to the purpose and power of God."

The miracles recorded in the Bible, were performed in the presence of hundreds and thousands of witnesses, and if they were spurious or false, why did not some that were present demonstrate their fallacy? They surely could have done this,

if those who performed them had been mere pretenders. "These things were not done in a corner, but in the broad open light of day, as though to satisfy all as to their genuineness. And the reader will observe, that their genuineness was never doubted by those among whom they were wrought. "They were not so stupid as not to know when the dumb spake, the blind saw, and the dead were raised."

When we take into consideration their number, their variety, and the circumstances under which they were wrought, we are at a loss to know upon what principle any one can doubt their genuineness. Examine for yourself the miracles wrought by the Savior of mankind, and see how easily their fallacy might have been detected, if such a thing had been possible.

Take, for example, that one recorded in the gospel of St. John, vi: 8. Observe first, that there were but five loaves and two fishes. The people could not have been deceived as to their number, nor as to the number of persons present on the occasion. For to suppose that they were, is entirely unreasonable. But the multitude were commanded to sit down, as though the object was to give all the opportunity of seeing that they were not about to be imposed upon. The Savior then took the loaves, blessed them, gave them to his disciples, and they to the people. "And likewise of the fishes, as much as they would."

And to demonstrate more fully the genuineness of the miracle, after the people were all filled, he said to his disciples, "gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost." And they filled seven baskets. And now, we ask, what was the impression made upon the minds of those present, before whose eyes this miracle had been wrought? (And they are surely the best judges.) Did they

suppose for a moment, that they had been imposed upon? Not the slightest evidence of any thing of the kind, but just the contrary. They may speak for themselves. Their language is, "This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world."

It should be remembered too, that this, as well as the rest of the miracles of Christ, and those wrought by his disciples, were performed in the presence of the wise and the great of a learned age. Persons who were well educated, and well prepared to defend themselves, when there was any probability of their being imposed upon, and were, consequently, not easily deluded. In addition to this, they wrought these miracles for the purpose of attesting truths which were hated by the authorities and powers which then ruled, and which involved the workers of them in poverty, bonds, and death. And they were wrought to establish the sublime and important truths of the Bible.

And did Christ and his disciples, without the least hesitation, work miracles in the presence of the people? We answer, that they did. And challenge the infidel world to prove the contrary. May all young men who read the Bible, feel the power of its truth, and be governed by its precepts.

Again, the character of those who wrote the Bible, is a sufficient guarantee of its truth.

They must have been men of good moral character, or the contrary would long since have been established. Infidels themselves have borne testimony to the good character of the inspired authors of the Bible, in language which is really touching and sublime. We now recollect of no one of them who urged any thing against the character of the sacred writers, except Tom Paine. And what he had to say, consisted of low and vulgar abuse, without any proof of what he said, as being true.

It is very evident, from the opposition with which the Bible has met in the world, that if there had been a single flaw in the character of those by whom it was written, it would long since have been brought to light, and exposed to public view. And as infidels have never attacked the character of the authors of the Scriptures, we may take it for granted, that nothing derogatory to their good standing can be urged against them.

But look at this point in a still stronger light. Would bad men write such a book as the Bible, a book which universally condemns vice and immorality in every shape and form? Would they write the best book in the world; containing the most lofty and sublime sentiments which were ever presented to the human mind, and at the same time, of incomparable beauty? To suppose such a thing would be wholly inconsistent.

But it may be said, that the authors of the Bible were ignorant men, and were, therefore, easily deceived and imposed upon. But we ask, could ignorant men produce such a book as the Bible? A book which contains so many historical facts, so much sound philosophy, so much poetry; which is unsurpassed in purity of style and sublimity of thought, by the best poets of ancient or modern times? No one could believe this. Then the sacred writers were not ignorant men, were not easily deceived. If they were imposed upon, we ask, by what, or by whom were they deceived? Where is the evidence of their mental weakness?

But, after all, it may be said that the sacred writers were hypocritical pretenders. But would such men write a volume which condemns, in strong language, every thing like hypocrisy or deceit? Then again, what object could they have in view? What motives could have induced them

to write such a book?' Not worldly glory, for this it invariably condemns. Not avarice, for this it totally repudiates. Selfishness would not influence them. To do good, even by false methods, the virtuous would despise. Besides, we ask, is it not strange, that the time when the Scriptures were forged, or the country and language, or some at least of the confederates have never been discovered? If written by those whose names are annexed, then it is manifestly divine. To confute this is beyond the power and combination of skepticism to effect."

Again, the fact that the sacred writers did not conceal their own faults, and the faults of others connected with them, is strong evidence of the truth of what they said.

If they had covered up their faults, and kept them concealed until they had been discovered by their enemies, and charged upon them, it would have been satisfactory proof that they were a set of impostors. But such is not the fact. "The writers were exact in detailing their own imperfections and sins, as well as the sins of others who were the avowed servants of God." For instance, Moses tells us how reluctant he was to undertake the divine mission, that is, to go into Egypt and lead the children of Israel to the promised land. Also, of his killing an Egyptian, for imposing upon one of his brethren. He tells us, also, that he was kept back from the promised land on account of some misstep which he had taken during his travels to that land. He relates, with "unvarying fidelity, the intemperance of Noah, just after he left the ark, as well as the results which followed." The sacred writers give us a detailed account of the incest of Lot, and the various circumstances with which it is connected. They relate the idolatry of Aaron, in making the

golden calf, and worshiping the same, in direct opposition to the will of God; the sins of David, in committing adultery with Uriah's wife, under circumstances, too, which made the crime more aggravating in its character, and of his adding murder to the sin of adultery; the unbelief of the disciples, Peter's denial of his Master, and his final fall, are all given with impartiality and exactness.

Now, can we suppose that these men, if their design had been to impose upon the human family, would have revealed all their faults and failings, and that, too, when they were surrounded by their enemies, who were seeking to get the advantage of them by every thing which they could urge against them? To suppose this, would be to suppose that they were the most ignorant set of impostors that ever appeared before the world.

In the absence, then, of proof to the contrary, we are bound to admit that they were honest, pious men, who spoke and wrote by the immediate inspiration of God. And to admit this, is to admit the truth of what they have said.

Again, the wonderful preservation of the Scriptures, is further evidence of their truth.

Upon what principle can we account for the singular preservation of the Scriptures, if not upon the principle, that an all-wise and powerful Being has watched over and taken care of them? Portions of the Bible have been written for more than three thousand years. "Whole libraries of works have perished of much more modern date," yet no book ever met with stronger opposition than this. It is a well established fact, that historians, in the first three centuries, quoted almost every passage in the New Testament Scriptures. And yet, when they are compared with copies of the Bible now extant, they agree in every particular.

In fact, there were various sects among the Jews, and they watched each other with a jealous eye; and, therefore, it would have been impossible to have made any alteration in the Holy Scriptures without being detected. So particular were the Jews, in regard to this matter, that the alteration of a word, syllable, or letter was sufficient to condemn the whole copy.

"There is no proof or vestige whatever, of any pretended alteration. If the Jews had willfully corrupted the books of the Old Testament *before* the time of Christ and his apostles, the prophets would not have passed such a heinous offense in silence; and if they had been corrupted *in* the time of Christ and his apostles, these would not have failed to censure the Jews. If they had been mutilated or corrupted *after* the time of Christ, the Jews would, unquestionably, have expunged the falsified prophecies concerning Christ, which were cited by him and by his apostles. * * * * And *since* the birth of Christ, the Jews and Christians have been a mutual guard and check upon each other."—*Horn's Intro.*, page 8.

It seems to us that this argument is conclusive. Let us suppose that some sect at the present day, Methodist, Baptist, Episcopalian, or Unitarian, should alter the Bible to suit the peculiar views of their denomination. Could either of them effect this without being detected? We know that this would be impossible. Well, there has never been a time since the Bible was first written, but what this would have been as difficult to effect, as it would be at the present day. And it really seems that this fact, of itself, should be a sufficient guarantee of the uncorrupted preservation of the Scriptures.

We wish the young reader to examine, carefully, what has been said upon this point; for it

is often said, and too often believed, that the Bible, though originally written by men who were inspired, it has so often been changed to suit the views of this and the other denomination, that it now contains but little of its original matter.

Again, the matter of the Scriptures, the important doctrines which they communicate, is evidence of their truth.

"The system of doctrines and the moral precepts which are delivered in the Scriptures, are so excellent and so perfectly holy, that the persons who published them to the world must have delivered them from a purer and more exalted source than their own meditations." Information of vast importance to all men may be obtained from the Scriptures, which can be obtained from no other source. As a young man, wishing to do right in all things, and to secure the largest amount of happiness, let us suppose that you wish for information in regard to the attributes of God, his nature, perfections, and government, the origin of man and his final destiny, to your duty to God, yourself, and your fellow-beings, to your condition in a moral point of view, and, finally, as to the means by which we may be reconciled to God, where will you obtain the information necessary in relation to these points?

Will you go to the works of nature? They leave you in doubts respecting the attributes of God, and say nothing of your duty or accountability. Will you go to infidelity for this information? It speaks in lofty strains of the wisdom and goodness of God, of the beauties of nature, and the splendor of the universe, but "here all is repulsive, chilling, and wretched." And so, in turn, you may go to reason, to learning, to science, and human discovery and attainment; but after all your inquiries, you will be left in the dark if

light can not be obtained from some other source. You should remember, too, that "this is all matter of essential consequence to us, all essential to our present welfare and everlasting salvation. These are truths peculiar to the Scriptures, and revealed nowhere else." The Bible gives you the information which you need, clothed with divine authority.

A correct knowledge of these things could never have been obtained by man without supernatural assistance. And as the sacred writers refer to the character of God, the moral condition of man, the duties which we are to perform, and the means of present and eternal salvation; and demonstrated the truth of what they said by the most positive evidence, it is difficult for any man to come to any other conclusion, if his mind is unbiased by prejudice, than that the Bible is a divine revelation.

"If, then, they are from God, the question of their wisdom and truth is settled. We can not admit that there is a being of infinite perfection, without admitting his perfect wisdom and holiness. He can not be deceived himself, and he can not deceive his creatures. On this rock we rest. The perfect truth of the Scriptures is as demonstrable as that God is wise and holy. And here is the advantage of possessing these oracles. Our great interest lies in moral and religious truth, and that truth is here. There is not a question relating either to duty or salvation, to which there is not here an answer. Are you an inquirer? There is the oracle. Consult it; for it shall speak and shall not lie."

And now, young reader, allow us to close this lecture with a few general observations, reserving for another short lecture the further discussion of this subject.

You are now just entering the theater of active life. Just engaging in the performance of its busi-

ness transactions, and in those pursuits which will occupy much of your time in the present state of existence. You may, like the few, glide smoothly along life's journey, with but little to disturb your mind or to lead you away from the path of virtue and morality. Or it may be to you a way of perplexities, disappointment, and sorrow. How important that your mind should be well established as to the truth of the Holy Scriptures! The promises of the Bible will be to you, if you will believe in their truth, a source of abiding consolation in your hours of affliction, distress and misfortune.

Remember that the greatest and wisest of men in all Christian nations, were likewise the most eminent for their faith in, and adherence to, the Christian religion. "They were men whose hopes were filled with immortality and the prospect of future rewards, and men who lived in a dutiful submission to all the doctrines and duties of revealed religion."

Young man, take the Bible for the man of your council. Rely upon its promises. Walk in its precepts. Be governed by its teachings. For "it has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter."

LECTURE XIII.

THE BIBLE A DIVINE REVELATION. — CONTINUED.

The fact that the Bible was given "by the inspiration of God," has always been a source of consolation to the humble Christian, but a source of anxiety and disquietude to all unbelievers. The reason is very obvious. The one abides by its decisions, and is satisfied, while the other professes to doubt in reference to its authority, and yet fears that it may be true. The Christian has examined the evidence of its truth, as well as the nature of those truths, and candidly believes the Bible to be the word of God.

He has arrived at that point where he never calls this matter in question. He has experience of the truth of God's word. He knows that it is true, because he feels that it is true. Others may tell him that he is in the dark, that he has been misled by false teachers, that the Bible is the work of designing men, that its doctrines are false, and that it is a well-arranged forgery; but he knows that he can not be mistaken, for he has experience of its power and influence, and knows, thereby, that there is something about it which must be supernatural.

For instance, it is represented as a word of light, and he realizes that his mind is enlightened; as a word of power, and his hard heart has been broken by this power; as a word of mercy, and his sins are all pardoned; as a word of comfort and joy, and he has "joy and peace in believing." And now he believes the Bible to be the word of God, not

from the external and internal evidences of its truth alone, but from an experimental knowledge of that truth. And to such an one the Bible will invariably be a source of happiness.

Being confident of its truth, satisfied with its claims to inspiration, he feels that he has nothing to do but to walk in its precepts. Having taken the Bible for his guide, he rests assured that God will protect and sustain him, according to his promise, in all the ills of life. And in his last expiring moments, he expects to gain the victory over his enemies, and to live finally with the angels of God in heaven. And do you ask, why this confidence, this reliance, this bright and cheerful hope of immortality, in this world where all is dark and gloomy? We answer, that he believes the Bible to be the word of him who can not lie, and he, therefore, expects to realize the fulfillment of his promises.

The infidel, however, occupies altogether different ground. From false teaching, improper example, and immoral influences, among other things, he discredits the Bible, and professes to believe that the movements of nature are, and should be, the only guide for man; and tries to satisfy himself that he is right. But oh! how his mind is troubled, and how weak his faith in the principles of infidelity! He has conversed with his infidel associates, examined their writings, and tried to persuade himself into the opinion that he can get along well enough, and yet disbelieve the Bible. But ever and anon, he meets with something which weakens his confidence in the principles of infidelity, and confirms the truth of the Holy Scriptures, until, at times, he is ready to exclaim: "Almost I am persuaded to believe the Bible!" For, although he professes to be infidel in his sentiments, he has no assurance as to the correctness

of such sentiments; and hence his doubts and fears that the Bible may be true.

He knows, if the Bible is true, that he occupies the wrong ground; that he is a sinner exposed to ruin; that he is responsible to his Creator for his conduct; and that he will soon have to stand at his bar: and yet he is unwilling to renounce his infidelity, and to believe in the doctrines and practice the precepts of God's Word. And now he must find something to satisfy his mind, and quiet his conscience. To effect this, he shuns conviction as to the inspiration of the Scriptures, and endeavors to convince himself that the doctrines of infidelity stand upon a solid basis. He feels that if he can but be convinced that this last statement is true, that he can, without fearing the consequences, pursue the path of sin; enjoy the pleasures of the world; gratify all his natural appetites and passions; and, at the same time, have no dread on his mind in reference to the future. And if the young reader will but examine this matter carefully, he will perceive the reason why there is so much infidelity in the world. It often originates in a desire to throw off all restraints imposed by religious obligations, that they may feel free to commit sin without the fear of punishment, which can not be done by an individual who believes the Bible.

Here we see one of the principles of that false philosophy, which prompts a man to oppose the doctrines of the Bible, and to endeavor to show that it is not the Word of God. It is simply to give quiet to his troubled mind, while he pursues a course directly opposite to its teachings. But notwithstanding the efforts which have been made, especially in the last eighteen hundred years, to show that the Bible is not an inspired volume, the truth is clearly demonstrated to all, except those

who have determined not to believe that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God."

To establish this point more fully, and, in the mean time, to return to the subject immediately under consideration, we notice the moral tendency of the Scriptures as evidence of their truth.

Wherever a knowledge of the Scriptures is diffused among the people, its tendency is to promote morality and virtue. No one, we think, can doubt the truth of this proposition, if he has but observed the difference between those who are favored with the teachings of the Bible and those who are not thus favored. The absence of religious knowledge, either in a community or nation, almost necessarily implies a low state of morals. You have but to look abroad in the world to see the truth of this declaration verified. Wherever the doctrines of the Bible are not taught and understood by the people, you will find invariably that they are selfish in their dispositions; unjust in their dealings with each other; unchaste in their habits; disposed to gratify their natural propensities; and are, in fact, inclined to every species of vice. While, on the other hand, wherever the Bible is known, and its authority recognized, its tendency is to purify the heart, to raise higher the standard of morality, and is thus, upon a large scale, conducive to the happiness of man. This, we say, is universally the case, in all nations and countries, where the precepts of the Bible are taught and understood by the people.

And are we sustained by the history of the Sacred Scriptures in the position which we have here assumed? We affirm that we are; and here again defy infidelity to produce a single instance to the contrary. What was the condition of the Jewish nation, as well as the surrounding nations, at the time that Chirst commenced preaching his

own "everlasting gospel?" They were in a state of darkness and degradation. What is the condition of those nations and countries at the present day, who have not the light of revelation to guide their feet into the path of virtue and religion? They have no correct ideas of morality, and are living in the practice of some of the most degrading habits and vices that the mind of man can conceive; and that, too, after every system of morality and philosophy that man's wisdom could devise had been tried to the utmost.

Now, if the Bible, wherever its light is diffused, tends directly to elevate the condition of such as have just been referred to—if it purifies the heart, controls the natural desires, checks the inclination to vice, and betters man's moral condition in every sense of the word—it must be divine in its origin. And that it produces these effects no reflecting man will deny.

"Let the blessed results of Christian faith, evinced in the lives and deaths of its true professors, be contrasted with the unfruitful works of darkness which is unrelieved by a ray of light from heaven. Let the generous and expansive love, the zealous and untiring benevolent labors, and the self-denying and devoted faithfulness of the Christian be compared with the selfish and contracted tempers, the fierce and vindictive passions, and the degrading sensuality or deceitful dealings of the best of heathens. Above all, let the peace, security and triumph of the feeblest of the feeblest sex, in the feeblest hours of human frailty, under the appalling approaches of man's most terrible enemy, be set against the dim uncertainties, the gloomy forebodings, and often fearful premonitions of despair, which have signalized the dying hour of the caviler and skeptic; and with all objections to this path, reason compels the exclamation, 'Let me die the

death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his.'"—*Evidences of Christianity.*

"No candid man will deny that, in countries where religion flourishes, the tone of moral feeling is much higher than in those where it is comparatively unknown; nor can it be denied that, in Christian churches, a much higher standard of morals is maintained than in the world. How rare a thing is it to find a member of a Christian church in a jail or penitentiary! And who, let us ask, are the foremost and most zealous opposers of immorality in all its forms? Are they infidels or Christians?"—*Ibid.*

Another evidence of the truth of the Bible is its tremendous influence on the character and manners of mankind.

Its influence upon nations, in these respects, is truly wonderful. Look at those nations which have paid due respect to the precepts of the Bible in framing the constitution of their country, enacting their laws, and in establishing their institutions. How mild and yet how efficacious such institutions and laws, and how beneficial such governments! How different, in all these respects, from such as are to be found in all nations which have not the Bible, and know nothing of its precepts!

"Where, among all cotemporary nations, will you find a form of government which can bear a comparison with the inspired and equitable code of the Jewish Theocracy? Study, then, the subsequent history of governments, and you will find, that since the dawn of the Christian era, wherever the principles of civil and religious liberty have prevailed, wherever public order and personal safety, the just authority of government, and the highest immunities and welfare of the governed have been combined, there the influence of the

Bible has been proportionably felt and acknowledged. There have been despotisms, it is true, under the name of religion; but where tyranny puts on this mask, it is always careful first to put out the light. 'Christianity,' says Montesquieu, 'is a stranger to despotic power.' 'Religion,' says De Tocqueville, 'is the companion of liberty in all its battles and conflicts, the cradle of its infancy, and the divine source of its claims.' England owes to the Bible the great charter of its liberties. And our own republic stands this day unexampled in the history of the world, simply because it is a land of Bibles. Take away the influence of this book from our wide-spread country, and how long would it be, under the necessary and rapid degeneracy of public morals, before the decisions of the ballot-box would give place to the decisions of the sword, the prerogatives of right to the powers of might, law to lust, government to anarchy, and anarchy to despotism."—*Evi. of Chris.*, page 54.

Look also at the influence of the Bible on man in a social point of view. Wherever its commands are properly appreciated, you find better citizens, better neighbors, better husbands, and among all, a greater regard for each other's welfare and happiness.

Finally, on this point, look at its influence on the character and movements of individuals.

Do you see that individual, as he passes along the public way? Why are his eyes fixed on the ground? Why is his countenance so dull, and why so many expressions of sorrow? Why is there so little energy, and so much awkwardness manifested in all his movements? He is a stranger to the Bible, and to the manners and customs which have been fostered under its influence. But look at that other individual. He has a brilliant eye, a cheerful countenance, an intellectual face, a

lively appearance; he is graceful in his movements, and seems to be full of life and energy. And do you inquire, why this difference? We answer, that the latter was raised in a land of Bibles. A land where educational enterprises meet with encouragement, where the people realize their responsibility to the Creator of all things, and where they are taught that if they will obey his commands, all will be well with them in time and in eternity. And are all these things true of the Bible? If so, it must have been dictated by infinite wisdom.

Another evidence of the truth of the Bible, is its power to convict and convert the soul.

Wherever its truth is fully revealed to the mind, conviction for sin is invariably the result produced. No man can read the Bible carefully, and with a desire to understand it, without seeing, as in a glass, his true condition, and that, too, when he does not desire this. When he is not examining the scriptures with the view of realizing his condition, but, on the other hand, to prove to himself that he is already in the right way, conviction will flash across his mind, and he will be fully prepared to view himself in the proper light. The Bible will tell him the truth in regard to his condition, and leaves on his mind no doubts in reference to it. No man who will read the Bible with care, can be at a loss to determine as to the relation which he sustains to the Author of all things.

But the Bible, unlike the various and false systems devised by men, does not leave him to mourn over his condition without any hope of relief, but shows him how he may obtain pardon, and is a sure guide to every man. Look at the case of the poet Cowper, as an illustration of this point. In looking at his own condition in a moral point of view, he clearly saw that he was wrong; that he

was not prepared for death, or for the solemn realities of eternity. To obtain relief, and to feel a conciousness that all was well, he tried every method which man's wisdom could devise, but was still left in doubt. He looked to infidelity and morality, to human learning and philosophy; but all to no purpose, for he found no relief.

He then turned his attention more especially to the study of the Scriptures, determined, if possible, to solve the all-important question, "What must I do to be saved?" He had pursued this course but a short time, before his eye fell upon that passage, in the third chapter of the book of Romans, which shows so clearly how "God can be just, and yet the justifier of him that believeth." By a new and powerful perception, he saw a beauty in the plan of salvation, and the wonderful adaptation of that plan to his condition, as well as to the condition of the whole human family. He saw how, by faith, in the promises of the Bible, man could obtain pardon, and enjoy peace of mind. He took hold of these promises, and at once found the desired relief, and realized that "joy which is unspeakable and full of glory." And the consolation of that hope which is "full of immortality and eternal life."

Well may it be asked of the Bible, "Who can record its victories of moral power and beauty? Who can rehearse its mighty achievements, its delightful transformations? Its influence has not been impaired by the lapse of ages. Its power is not limited to any country, or clime, or color, or tongue. Everywhere it diffuses light, and liberty, and joy, and blessedness. Surely we may exclaim with holy rapture, 'Thy word is truth.'"

We design, however, before we close this lecture, to notice some of the objections which are fre-

quently urged by infidels against Christianity and against the Bible.

Infidels, in the first place, attacked the evidences of the truth of the Christian religion, and endeavored to show that there was no proof of its divine origin. In this attempt, after repeated efforts, they failed. The evidence of the truth of revealed religion was so clear, and so positive, that they were compelled to retreat from the contest, and adopt some other method by which to accomplish their design. They now manifest their opposition to Christianity in general, by bringing up a long list of objections. But a few simple illustrations will make it appear, that they have been equally as unsuccessful in this attempt as they were in the former.

Infidels object to the Bible, from the fact that some of the peculiar doctrines which it contains, are mysterious, and, as they say, "contrary to reason." Hence they maintain, that "where mystery begins, religion ends." This objection is met by B. M. Smith, when he says, "This objection is erroneous: for nothing is so mysterious as the eternity and self-existence of a God; yet, to believe that God exists, is the foundation of all religion. We can not comprehend the common operations of nature; and if we ascend to the highest departments of science, even to the science of demonstration itself, the mathematics, we shall find that mysteries exist there."

"Mysteries in the Christian religion, instead of being suspected, should rather be regarded as a proof of its divine origin; for, if nothing more was contained in the New Testament than we previously knew, or nothing more than we could easily comprehend, we might justly doubt if it came from God, and whether it was not rather a work of man's device."

Said Sidney Smith, "To a schoolboy, Newton's philosophy may be above reason, but can not be said to be opposed to his reason, for on account of ignorance and immaturity, his reason can not be exercised in its principles." And again, after referring to various operations in the machinery of nature, he says, "yet who doubts the existence of the natural world, and that of himself, or the facts adverted to, however wonderful, because they involve mysteries? He, indeed, who rejects any doctrine of revelation or revealed religion itself, on account of mysteries, must, to be consistent, cease all mental and physical efforts. The farmer must cease to sow, the mechanic to labor, and the philosopher to reason, till they fully comprehend the inexplicable wonders of the earth, the body, and the mind. We must too, reject all natural religion. Is the Trinity incomprehensible? The omniscience, omnipresence, omnipotence, yea, self-existence of a great First Cause, are no less so." Thus we perceive that this objection, though repeatedly urged, amounts to nothing, so far as our faith in revealed religion is concerned.

And we would say to all young men, that whenever the infidel tries to shake your faith in the truth of the Bible, by contending that a "revelation which contains mysteries is a contradiction," you may easily get clear of them by showing that the Bible reveals the existence of God, but not how he exists. That he created all things, but not how he created them. That he now sustains all things, but not how he sustains them. That the Divine Spirit enlightens the mind of man, but not how it operates to produce this effect, besides various other illustrations of the same idea.

Another objection to Christianity, as a system of revealed truth, is as follows:

"Christianity claims to be a universal blessing

to mankind, and if so, why is it so slow in its operations, and why is it that so few of the inhabitants of the earth, are in possession of its benefits?" We answer, that if Christianity comes to us attended by evidence which may be relied upon, after the most minute investigation of all its claims, the fact that all others are not in possession of its light, nor in the enjoyment of its blessings, is rather a poor argument against its truth.

For the same objection might be urged with equal force against various other systems, the practical utility of which, no one pretends to doubt. The science of medicine and civil government, may be given as examples. Diseases of various kinds have often been arrested in their progress by the skillful application of medicine, and a high state of civilization, is the result of judicious laws, properly administered. But the fact that many communities and nations are deprived of the benefits of both, is no argument against the utility of either.

It is very evident that the Divine Being could have adopted some method, by which the principles of Christianity might have been more rapidly disseminated among the nations of the earth, but he saw proper not to do so. He prefers to carry on his plans, which are to secure the happiness of man in a spiritual point of view, by human agency.

Indeed, says B. M. Smith, "none will require the universal reception of Christianity, as either an evidence of its divine origin or an argument for its purity; for where it has been fully published, it has not been universally received, and unless free agency were destroyed by an enforcement ef its claims, in the present state of things, we see no reason to expect such a reception. This conceded, whether a minority or majority have received it, is not very material. But we have reason to believe, that a much larger number will ultimately

appear to have been benefited than the objection intimates. The present and past generations of men may constitute a minority of the whole race. What are yet to be the effects of Christianity, we know not. Probably they will exceed all former experience. When then, to Christian adults, we add the vast millions of infants interested in the atoning blood of Christ, and the healing power of the divine spirit, it is possible a vast majority of the human family will have been found participants in the blessings of the Gospel."

"But," says the infidel, "we can show from history that there was a period when men were entirely debarred from all freedom of opinion upon religious subjects, when this intolerance was manifested in the most cruel persecutions, by an artful and cruel priesthood who governed and who pillaged the world."

All this, we reply, may be true. But are we justifiable in concluding, from this fact, that Christianity is a system of falsehood? Is every thing to be considered bad in itself, because it is capable of being abused? If so, liberty among the American people should not be so highly prized. For in many instances, it has been woefully abused. Education, wealth and power may be put down in the same category. In fact, intellectual, moral and scientific knowledge may be opposed upon the same ground, for no one, we suppose, will doubt but what they have, at times, been converted into instruments of evil, by men who were incapable of appreciating the benefits of either. There is scarcely a good principle either in law, science, or morals, but what has, at some time, been turned out of its proper channel by mistaken zeal or by evil design.

Admitting, then, that there was a time in the dark ages, when the principles of Christianity were not understood, when its adherents were

bigoted, intolerant, and unfeeling in their disposition, it still has nothing to do with the truth of revealed religion. The object is not so much to show what Christianity *was* at this or the other time, but to show what its spirit and tendency *is* at the present day.

Its genuineness does not depend upon the conduct of those who profess to be governed by its principles; for let them do as they may, it is still unchanged as to its character and tendency. The best set of men that the world ever saw could not make it true if it is false; nor could the worst make it false if it is true.

"If," says S. Smith, "it can be shown that there is any thing in the Christian religion necessarily connected with bigotry and intolerance, this objection would be pertinent and powerful; but to suppose that a Christian is a bigot now, because there were very few Christians who were not so three hundred years ago, is to suppose the existence of principles and causes which every cool, unprejudiced mind perceives to have, long ago, lost their influence upon mankind."

"No cause ought to be judged," says B. M. Smith, "by its corruptions and abuses. Immoralities of Christians can not be charged on the system, till shown to proceed from its principles. But the purity of those principles is admitted in the charge, for Christians are criticised as much, or more, for want of conformity to the peculiar precepts to their own religion, as thus common to it over the religion of nature. If persecution were of the spirit of Christianity, where this most prevailed that would most abound. But the reverse is notoriously true. Religious persecutions have uniformly resulted from the acts and motives of unchristian men; and history attests, that those ministers or others, who have become tyrants over

the souls and bodies of their fellows, erected stakes and gibbets, founded the infernal dungeons, and contrived the cruel racks of the inquisition; in other respects, forfeited all claims to be regarded as Christians. Isolated instances may be found, when, under the influence of evil example and depraved public sentiments, or driven by oppression, men of undoubted Christian principle have turned aside from rectitude in these respects; but persecution, and every harsh and cruel mode of propagating Christianity have ever been condemned by those who, in every age, have enjoyed the best reputation as Christians; and the Bible not only does not teach, but most expressly denounces such practices."

But we have extended this lecture beyond what we intended when we commenced it. But we hope the young reader will consider the importance of the subject treated of, and make due allowance.

What we have said in the last three lectures, is designed to guard you against one of the worst of all evils, that of infidelity.

We have noticed, as you have doubtless observed, only a few of the plainest evidences of the Christian religion, and have merely glanced at a few of the objections which are often urged against it as a system of divine truth. To set forth all the evidences of the divine origin of Christianity, and notice all the objections to it upon the part of infidelity, would require a large volume. Able writers have spent much time in collecting facts, which go to prove directly the divine authority of the Bible; and if you will candidly and carefully examine their writings, we have strong confidence in your being a firm believer in its truths, whether you practice its precepts or not.

Let us suggest that you read, at your earliest opportunity, "The Jew's Letters to Voltaire," "Horne's Introduction to the Study of the Bible," "The Evidences of Christianity," consisting of a series of lectures delivered by distinguished ministers, at Jefferson University, in the State of Virginia, "Watson's Conversation" on the Bible, and Bishop "Watson's Apology for the Bible," in a series of letters addressed to Tom Paine. We mention these books as being worthy of your special attention, from the fact that they are easily understood, and are sufficient to convince any unprejudiced mind as to the truth of the Holy Scriptures.

Let the young reader remember, that if Christianity is true, it is "tremendously true." If the Bible be the Word of God, we are fallen and depraved beings, in a state of probation, and on trial for eternity. If the Bible be true, there is a place of future endless punishment, into which thousands and millions have plunged themselves by unbelief and disobedience. And we, if we pursue the same course, must meet with the same fate. While, on the other hand, there is a place of future endless happiness, where many of our friends now rest from labor, toil, and care; and to this state of happiness we may attain, by using the means with which we are so abundantly furnished. To which place will you go? May an all-wise Being save you, by his providence, from the cheerless paths of infidelity, and direct your feet to the portals of eternal felicity.

LECTURE XIV.

THE NECESSITY OF INVESTIGATING THE SCIENCE OF CHRISTIANITY.

Having noticed in the preceding lectures, some of the evidences of the truth of Christianity, we now design noticing, in a brief way, the necessity of investigating it as a science.

However true it may be that Christianity is of God, however much it may have done, or may yet do for others, we shall never realize its advantages nor the fullness of its blessings, if we are so indifferent as to be ignorant of its principles. We should ever bear in mind, that to be ignorant of the laws of God, as revealed in the Scriptures, to be ignorant of his requirements, and of the duties which we owe to him as our Creator, will not excuse us, in the day of punishment, for the violation of these laws, or for refusing to obey the divine commands. For, in respect to these things, we are favored with the means of information.

We often wonder how the young men of this country can, as a deliberate matter, content themselves in a state of almost entire ignorance of the Bible, when they have so many opportunities of being familiar with its teachings, for how often does the inquiry arise in the minds of all reflecting young men, what is to be our condition after we have passed away from the shores of time? Are we to live again in another state of existence? If so, what is the nature of the life which we shall live after the present life shall close? What relation has the present life to the future? Will that be a life of endless joy and happiness, or a life of misery and

wretchedness? Can we do any thing in this life which will affect our future condition? If so, how shall it be done? How shall we act so as to please God? How obtain the pardon of sin, and be prepared for happiness in a future state of existence? Oh! how important are such inquiries?

Upon all these points, Christianity, as revealed in the gospel of Jesus Christ, gives us all the information we need. They are made so plain, "that the wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err therein."

It reveals to us what infidelity never has revealed, and never can reveal, that though we die, we shall be raised from the dead, and, without doubt, shall live forever. And more than this, it tells us that provision has been made for the salvation of all men. It tells us also, that by walking in all the commandments of God blameless, and by approaching his throne in a proper manner, that we can do something here, which will affect our condition in the future, something which will make that future life one of endless happiness. And shall we not pay more attention to a system which gives satisfactory information in regard to all these things, than to all the systems in the world beside? Surely you will see the propriety of so doing.

But young men should endeavor to know whether Christianity is true or false, as a matter of satisfaction to themselves; whether they are much concerned about being governed by its precepts or not. If you have made up your mind to pursue a certain course, irrespective of the truth or falsehood of the Bible, you ought still to be acquainted with its teachings. For if you are voluntarily ignorant of its principles, you give evidence that you have determined to walk in the dark in preference to the clearest light, on the one hand, or on the other, that you fear that investigation might induce you

to change your mind. You should always be willing to come to the light, however distinctly it may reveal to you your deformities and imperfections. Whatever may be your opinions, you should be open to conviction, and should always be ready to renounce erroneous ideas, when, by investigation, you learn that they are such.

But then you can not judge as to the truth or falsehood of the Christian religion, until you have investigated its claims to be of divine origin. Thrown, as you may expect to be in a country like this, among men whose opinions vary so much on this subject, it is necessary that you should have well-defined and established opinions of your own, and they should be the result of close investigation, formed, too, after mature deliberation. If not, your mind will perpetually be unsettled. You will often find yourself halting between two opinions. Sometimes satisfied with your condition, then again doubting as to the results of the course which you are pursuing. Whether Christianity be true or false, men, as a general thing, feel more interest in regard to it, than they do in regard to any thing else. And this, too, whether they give us an expression of their feelings or not.

As a general rule, men spend their views quite freely on this subject; some contending that the Bible is true, others that it is false. And while we listen to them, we shall, if we are still in the dark by inattention to its teachings, find ourselves inclined first to one side, then to the other. In looking at this fact, we have often thought that men, who occupy just such ground, are the most miserable men to be found in the world.

Further upon this point, we are fully persuaded, in our own minds, that no man would oppose the religion of the Bible, or doubt the justness of its claims, if he would pay proper attention to the evi-

dences of its truth. We have long been satisfied as to the correctness of the position here assumed. But as we intend noticing this point more particularly in another part of this lecture, we will only state at present, that there are so many instances which go to establish the fact just stated, that we are at loss to know how any candid man can, for a moment, doubt as to its correctness.

You are, doubtless, acquainted with individuals who were once opposed to the Christian religion. They seemed to be, and doubtless were in earnest, and thought, like St. Paul, "that they ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth." They were fierce in their attacks, bold in their declarations, and reckless in their conduct. Now, however, they occupy different ground altogether. Instead of opposing Christianity, they are trying to advance its interests in the world. Instead of saying it is false, they positively declare it to be true. Instead of trampling upon its precepts they delight in being governed by its teachings.

Well, why, we ask, such a change? We answer, that something has been said or done which arrested their attention, and directed it to the evidences of the truth of Christianity. They have examined its claims, and are, as the result of such examination, satisfied as to its truth.

It may be said, we know, that such men have hypocritically professed Christianity from prospects of temporal advantage, and, therefore, they are not sincere in their pretensions. But we ask, what right have we to say that such men are dishonest now, and that they were honest before the change here referred to? If we are to speculate about this matter at all, we are bound to say that it is much more probable that they were dishonest in the former, than in the latter condition. For in renouncing infidelity, such men are renouncing

long-cherished opinions, and are adopting notions to which they have long been opposed. Hence it is reasonable to suppose that, in adopting such opinions, they must have been satisfied as to their correctness after diligent examination.

We know not that we can more forcibly illustrate the importance of investigating the doctrines and the evidences of the truth of Christianity, than by noticing some things which lead directly to infidelity; and we wish the young reader to notice particularly this part of the subject.

We remark, first, that a want of information leads to a disbelief in Christianity.

We do not mean to say here that ignorance as to science, natural philosophy, civil government, and the like, lead to infidelity, although this may be true in many instances; for a man may be ignorant of all these, and yet be a firm believer in the truth of the Bible. But we do mean to say that to be ignorant of the Bible, and the evidences of its inspiration, does lead to unbelief, and to all its concomitant evils; and you will find, by examination, that nine out of ten who profess infidelity are ignorant of the Scriptures.

It is true that such men read the Bible, hear sermons, and listen to lectures and conversations on the various topics of Christianity, and have every opportunity of becoming familiar with its principles, but they pay but little attention to them. They do not see the great importance of looking carefully into such things; and the result is, they are almost entirely ignorant of them. Their minds have been running all the time upon something else. From the days of their youth, they have been earnestly engaged in seeking for worldly distinction. They have a strong desire to climb to the highest pinnacle of fame, to live above the common masses of mankind, that they

might thereby secure the praise of men; or they have been engaged in perplexing business all their lives, trying to secure to themselves a vast fortune, that they might live in ease and splendor; or else they have suffered themselves to become bewildered in pursuit of worldly pleasure, and have been trying to drink at all its streams, and to secure happiness by following their natural inclinations; and, consequently, "they have neither ability, inclination nor leisure to enter into critical discussions concerning the truth of Christianity."

And now, how easily may such men be deceived by the advocates of infidelity, and cheated out of the faith which was taught them by their fathers! At first they seem startled on hearing any objection to the truth of the Christian religion, for they have always been taught to believe that it was true; but as they, from a want of examination, or from ignorance of its doctrines, and of the evidences of its truth, are unprepared to answer the objections which are urged by infidels, they at once suppose they are mistaken in their views, and are ready, without reflection, to join in with those whose object is to pull down the strongholds of Christianity.

Now, this is not the case with those who pay attention to the doctrines of the Bible, and to the evidences of its truth. Says Mr. Watson, a close observer of such things, "It is a singular fact, that wherever the Book of God is least known, there is the most infidelity. The most accute infidel that ever wrote against Christianity confessed that he had never read the New Testament through. When measures were adopted, by a band of infidels, to spread their own principles throughout Europe, in what countries had they the greatest success? Where the Bible was kept from the people; in France especially, where they were

predisposed, by their national habits, to receive any kind of fashion, if communicated by wit and ridicule—infidelity spread extensively. Attempts were made in our own country; infidel books were widely circulated. If we have been, in a great measure, preserved from this pestilent fashion, it is because the truth of God has been more generally known, and that because it has been more faithfully preached and taught, not only in our pulpits, but in our schools and families. I know that infidelity had some success; but it was chiefly among those who had never had the advantage of Christian education.

Again, the mind of the individual who has never investigated the science of Christianity, is subject to erroneous impressions, which are injurious in their tendency, from the fact that they lead ultimately to a rejection of the Bible.

This has already been intimated in the preceding part of this lecture, but deserves to be noticed more particularly. If you would realize fully the truth of this proposition, examine the history of those who are now confirmed infidels, and see how easily they were led astray at the start, and how slender the foundation upon which they now stand. This man is an infidel, in sentiments and in practice, because his father disbelieved the Bible, and said it was written by men who were uninspired, but never stopped to investigate the matter, and to see whether his father was right or wrong in his opinions. That one is an unbeliever in the Bible, from the fact that an associate of his, in his younger days, was in the habit of declaring that the Bible was a forgery, from beginning to end; quoting, it may be, at the same time, the language of some writer who was as ignorant of the Bible as he who made the false declaration.

Having too much confidence in the judgment of his associate, he has never examined the evidence of the truth of the Bible, and is entirely ignorant of the fact that it was given by inspiration of God. A third will tell you that he is an infidel, from the fact that he has investigated the doctrines of the Christian religion, and can find no evidence of its truth. And yet, if you will question him closely, you will soon perceive that he has examined the writings of infidels only, and that he has left untouched the clear and positive evidences of its truth. And so we might go on, if it was necessary, but we forbear.

A striking instance of what has just been said, occurred a short time since, not far from where we now write. An infidel, on board of one of our western steamers, was loud and clamorous in his abuse of the Bible. He was asked, finally, if he ever read the Bible. He answered that he had. His objections to it were then called for, and his reply was, "it contains a great many falsehoods;" and then gave, as an instance, the following: "The Bible says that Moses lived before the flood; and yet it represents him as giving a detailed account of all its particulars:" and then, with an air of triumph, asserted that these contradictory statements were set forth in the Bible. Now, let the young reader remember that this infidel had said that he had read the Bible, and he will at once be able to decide whether he had read it carefully or not, when he is told (though he has learned this before) that the Bible emphatically represents Moses as living after the flood, and was, of course, capable of giving a correct account of all that occurred in connection with it, so far as it was necessary for man to be informed in regard to it.

But we should investigate the science of Christianity that we may avoid the influence of preju-

dice, which leads directly to infidelity in its worst stage. We say in its worst stage, because the mind under its influence, stubbornly resists the light of divine truth.

Prejudice, in fact, is one of the worst evils that ever afflicted the mind of man. A young man may be inclined to infidelity from ignorance, from inattention to the teachings of the Bible, from improper influences and examples in the days of his youth, or from evil communications, and yet his mind may be open to conviction; and by an examination of the truths of the Christian religion, he may be brought back from the error of his ways. But when the mind is completely under the influence of prejudice against the teachings of the Bible, it is with the greatest difficulty that such an one can be brought to yield to its claims. Nothing less than an array of facts and evidences which amount almost to positive demonstration can induce him to renounce his infidelity, and practice the precepts of Christianity.

Look, for a moment, at the evils of prejudice in the minds of those who profess to be seeking earnestly for the truth. Many of them go so far as to doubt the necessity of revealed religion altogether. They assume the ground, for want of information, that reason is sufficient to direct men into the path of happiness, especially when it is enlightened and assisted by the works of nature; and, therefore, maintain that man has no use for the Bible.

But, if they would but open their eyes and examine this subject carefully, they would soon perceive that the greatest philosophers, and the most profound students, unassisted by the light of inspiration, have been unable to discover the true character of the Divine Being, or the way that leads to holiness. Four thousand years had passed

away, before the Christian era, and surely in this time the world had been fairly tried; at least to a sufficient extent to convince any man who will reflect properly, that without a revelation from God, man would have been in the dark in regard to matters of the greatest importance.

But then, such men doubt the existence of experimental religion in the human heart.

They consider it to be fanaticism, the result of diseased or fanciful imagination; and treat those who profess to enjoy religion with contempt. Now suppose such men would pause and reflect; first, upon the number and character of those who do profess and have professed to enjoy religion. And secondly, that they had no temporal advantage in view in doing so. And lastly, that they adhered to it more firmly than ever in their dying hour—that hour when it is reasonable to suppose that men will be honest. If they would do this, would not their views and feelings undergo a change? Would they not see the inconsistency of the views which they now entertain.

But one of the most prominent reasons for investigating the science of Christianity, is, that a fair and candid examination of that subject, will, in most instances, produce conviction as to its divinity.

After paying a good deal of attention to this subject, we are well satisfied that an investigation of the doctrines and the evidences of the truth of Christianity, will lead to a firm persuasion of its divine origin. Thousands who are now opposed to Christianity, to the Bible, to the Christian ministry, and to the Church, with her peculiar institutions and ordinances, would cease to oppose any or all these, if they could but be induced to lay aside their infidelity long enough to investigate the evidences that Christianity is of God.

To exemplify the happy results of investigation, we may notice the case of Nathaniel, as given in the first chapter of the Gospel of St. John. He was full of prejudice against Christ and against the doctrines of the Gospel, and doubtless, tried every way, as did the rest of the Jews, to convince himself that Christ was a mere man; knowing that if he could succeed in this undertaking, he need have no further uneasiness in regard to the precepts of his Gospel. In the meantime, Philip, a friend of Nathaniel's became convinced that Christ was the true Messiah; that he was, in a word, the Saviour of the world. Shortly afterward, he findeth Nathaniel, and said unto him, "We have found him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write." In other words, "I am convinced that Christ is the son of God, and that his doctrines are true. Nathaniel's prejudices were immediately aroused, and we hear him inquire, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" Philip seemed to know from experience something of the results of investigation, and said to Nathaniel, "Come and see." That is, come and see, and hear, and examine for yourself.

Jesus saw Nathaniel coming to him, and said of him, "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile." Nathaniel is at once astonished; and doubtless inquired in his mind (for he begins now to investigate), how does he know that I am without guile or hypocrisy? How does he know that I am in earnest? How does he know any thing about the state of my mind? Hence, we hear him inquire, "Whence knowest thou me?" Said Jesus, "Before that Philip called thee, while thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee." Here he was convinced that Christ knew his heart. That he was in the presence of an infallible Being. And at once, conviction flashes

across his mind; he renounces his unbelief in the Divinity of Christ, and we hear him exclaim, "Thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel."

We give another instance which may be said to be twofold in its character, and is of more modern date. We refer to the case of Lord Littleton and Mr. West. They were noted infidels of their day, and were in the habit of opposing Christianity to the utmost of their ability and influence.

On a certain occasion they met together, whether for the purpose of building each other up in the principles of infidelity, or for some other purpose, we are not advised. Be this as it may, the result of their deliberations was, a determination upon the part of each, to make a renewed and vigorous attack upon the evidences of the truth of the Christian religion. They intended to show to the world, that Christianity was fabricated by man's ingenuity, and deserved to be driven from the earth as a grand imposition upon the human family.

Each one selected his proposition. West, if we remember correctly, (one of them at least,) selected the resurrection of Christ, Lord Lyttleton, the conversion of St. Paul. The first felt confident that he could prove that the story of Christ's resurrection was a forgery. The second, that he could demonstrate that St. Paul, on his way to Damascus, saw no supernatural light, heard no supernatural sound or voice, but was deceived on the one hand, or misrepresented the case on the other. Having thus arranged things, they appointed a time to meet, and put their essays together, and publish them to the world. They separated, and each one applies himself to his task.

In imagination, we see Mr. West investigating the truth of Christ's resurrection. In vain, does he look for a contradictory statement, or for some-

thing upon which to predicate his belief that the evangelists were a set of liars. The further he examined the "story" of the resurrection, the more clearly does he see that Christ did arise from the dead on the third day after his crucifixion. He distinctly saw that the apostles had given a true and faithful account of the resurrection of their Master; and his mind was completely overwhelmed by the power of divine truth. He yielded to his convictions, and was soon a soundly converted man. And now, instead of writing an essay against Christianity, he writes one in favor of its truth; and his theme is, "now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept." And his arguments, in favor of the truth of Christ's resurrection, will never be refuted while time itself shall endure.

But how of Lord Lyttleton, and what was the result of investigation in his case? Was he changed from an infidel to a firm believer in the Christian religion by an examination of the circumstances connected with the conversion of St. Paul? We answer that he was. And he made that the principal theme in writing an essay in defense of the doctrines of the Bible, the influence of which never can be destroyed by the wit, satire, or the hatred of the infidel world.

They met at the appointed time; but O, what a change in their feelings and designs; in their hopes and desires, since their last meeting! Their essays were published to the world in book form, copies of which may be found both in Europe and America.

In this example, the young reader will not fail to see the great importance of investigating the doctrines of Christianity. For in many instances all depends upon it. We might give many other instances of the mighty changes which have been

produced in the minds of millions of individuals by an examination of the principles of the Christian religion; but those already given, will, we hope, be sufficient.

Now, young reader, remember that you are in a state of probation, surrounded by those whose example and influence, if you are not very much on your guard, will lead you astray. Look well to your principles, and see that they are well founded; that they are in accordance with the truth as revealed by the great "I am." And above all, seek for that wisdom which cometh down from above, and it shall safely guide you to everlasting life.

We will close this lecture in the words of Amos Binny, when he asks, "where do you hear the Bible contemned, and its authority spurned? It is among the ignorant and vicious. Where does it receive unmeasured insult and scorn, but in gambling-houses, tippling-houses, and other evil places? Who are they that sneer about the indelicacies of the Bible, but those whose imagination and heart are predisposed to such things? The Bible is *not unchaste*, but a *consuming fire* to all iniquity. This is the true reason why unjust, profane, and impure men complain of it. As, therefore, the difficulty with unbelievers is one of the *heart*, not of the *intellect*, never be inclined to dispute with them about the evidences of Christianity. In examining the subject of its evidences ourselves, we should, first of all, ask the question, "am I *willing* to become all that Christianity requires, provided it can be proved to be from heaven? Whoever can answer this question in the affirmative, will find every obstruction to the fullest faith removed."

LECTURE XV.

ON READING THE SCRIPTURES.

Having noticed some of the evidences of the truth of the Bible, we think it not out of place to present to the mind of the young reader some considerations which should induce him to read and study its contents.

The present may be said to be a reading age. Any and everywhere throughout our country, as well as in our cities and larger towns, you will see evidences of the fact, that the people are in the habit of reading; and especially is this the case with the more sober classes of society. Some read for pastime, others for amusement. Some to gratify a propensity for things novel in their character; others, that they be prepared to defend, successfully, some particular theory in politics or theology. It is to be regretted, however, that so few among those who have acquired a taste for reading, read those books from which the most solid and useful information is to be obtained. A large majority of those who read, are fond of perusing the light and trashy productions of the day, which, for the moment, excite the mind beyond proper bounds; and if not injurious in their tendency, produce no good effect.

But what is most of all to be regretted, is, that the Bible, at the present day, is, comparatively speaking, almost entirely neglected by the generality of the people. How few, in this land of religious privileges, may be said to be Bible readers! We speak here, not of infidels or practical unbelievers, but of those who believe the Bible to

be the Word of God. How many young men are to be found in this country, who, although they have had every opportunity of being familiar with the Scriptures, are almost as ignorant of their contents as if they had never seen them! Talk to them of novels and literary productions, of science and new inventions, and, especially, of politics, wealth, and fashions, and of all these they seem to have, at least, a general idea; and, with a few exceptions, it is proper and right that they should have correct ideas of such things.

But talk to them of a book which reveals to man the existence and character of the Supreme Ruler of the universe, the duties which they owe to him and to their fellow-beings, and it may be said of thousands of the young men of this country, all that they know is, that there is a book generally recognized as being of divine authority. If they lived in a land of heathenism, where the Bible is scarcely ever seen or heard of, they could readily be excused; but situated as they are, in this respect, they are without any excuse whatever, if they are ignorant of its teachings.

We often meet with persons, who seem to be surprised that there is so little virtue and so much vice in a country where there is so much learning, science, and philosophy, and, especially so many religious institutions. They seem not to understand why it is that the people are so wicked in their dispositions, immoral in their conduct, and unjust in their dealings with each other; where, as they suppose, there is so much to induce them to be otherwise. We know, that as to religious light and knowledge, we have the advantage of many other nations and countries. But the principal reason why there is so much infidelity, error, immorality, discord, and unfair dealing, as well as so many political dissensions, and, in a word, so much

irreligion in this highly-favored land, is, that the masses of the people do not read the Bible. They are not governed by its precepts, nor influenced, as they should be, by its teachings.

And if ever the institutions of this country come to nought, and her glory departs, and her beauty and greatness are destroyed, her ruin, in a political, moral, and religious point of view, may be attributed mainly to a neglect of the teachings of the Bible. While we need have no fears as to our destiny as a nation, as long as the Word of God is our guide, its principles properly appreciated, and while its precepts exercise their legitimate influence upon the minds and conduct of the people.

Having made these general remarks, we notice, particularly, some of the reasons why young men should regularly and carefully read the Bible.

In the first place, you should read the Scriptures, because they are one of the principal safeguards against infidelity.

This fact has been noticed, to some extent, in another lecture, but deserves a passing notice in this.

Infidelity can not live where the Bible is read and understood. In fact it is a rare occurrence to find a professed infidel in a community where the doctrines of the Bible are generally received. And if an advocate of infidelity goes into such a community, confident that he will be able to maintain his infidel principles, he will see, in the devotional feelings manifested by the advocates of religion, the piety of their conversation, and the morality of their conduct, such strong evidence of the truth of the Scriptures, that he will feel that his principles are unsound, and that he has been, up to this time, woefully imposed upon by a worse set of impostors than he had formerly believed the authors of the Bible to be.

The light of revelation is destructive to infidelity, wherever it may be found, no matter what may be the garb it has assumed, or what may be its form.

Show us a young man who, in sunshine and in storm, in sickness and in health, in poverty and in wealth, has carefully and statedly read his Bible, and we will show you a young man who will feel himself degraded if he is classed among professed infidels. Infidels have long since found, that to convert such young men to infidelity is a very difficult matter. They may exhaust their wit and ingenuity, try their infidel books and periodicals, and all shall be carefully interwoven with science and philosophy, that its poison may not be detected, but the light of divine truth searches all things, and will always reveal the ruinous effects of infidelity to the mind of that individual who will pay proper attention to it.

As an illustration of this last statement, we may be allowed to refer to the case of a colored man, who lived in the western part of Virginia. He was, at the time here referred to, the servant of an inn-keeper. On a certain occasion, a noted infidel called at the inn, and, by some means, after he had been there a short time, he learned something of the character of this servant, and of his unshaken confidence in the truth of the Bible. This infidel was untiring in his efforts to unsettle the faith of all who believed in the truth of revealed religion. Hence he must have a conversation with this colored man. He inquired of him why he believed the Bible, and requested him to give him some evidence of its truth; stating, at the same time, that he could not believe its doctrines. The substance of the answer was, "You will find the evidence of its truth from the beginning to the end, if you will read it carefully. It

tells the truth on every page, and I now feel its power in my heart." The infidel soon left this servant to enjoy his own opinions and feelings, for he saw that he was too well acquainted with the Bible to be imposed upon by one who knew but little of its doctrines.

Now we admit that men may read the Bible, and still be infidel in their sentiments; but this is very rarely the case when the mind of the individual is open to conviction, and when he is candid in his investigations.

Emerson, a noted infidel in his day, read the Bible regularly; but his object was, to show that one part contradicted another. A large portion of his time was spent in this way. But in the meantime, he paid no attention to its beauty, its harmony, the sublimity of its doctrines, or the evidence of its truth. If he had done so, his mind would have been enlightened, and he would have seen the error of his way. But searching, as he did, for contradictions in the Bible, we are not astonished that he was so blinded by unbelief, as to rejoice, at the end of his labors, that his efforts had been crowned with success.

If he had spent half the time in examining the evidences of the truth of the Bible, that he did in trying to convince the world that it was a human production, he would have been convinced that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God."

The same remark will hold good when applied to thousands of others.

On almost every page of a book called the "Age of Reason," written by Thomas Paine, we find positive evidence that he was entirely unacquainted with the teachings of the Bible. Take one instance as an example of his ignorance. He says that the Bible teaches that "Christ was on the earth only some four or five days after his resur-

rection." And yet, if the reader will turn to the beginning of the Acts of the Apostles, he will there find the following language: "Christ showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of the Apostles *forty* days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God." Here you see that "instead of *four*, you perceive there were *forty* days between the crucifixion and the ascension."

Many other examples of the same kind might be pointed out, but this should be sufficient to put you on your guard in reference to the writings of such men; and, at the same time, shows indirectly that a knowledge of the Scriptures is calculated to shield us from the withering effects of infidelity.

Another reason why young men should read the Scriptures is, that they guard the mind against the influence of error.

It is very important that we should, as far as possible, have correct views concerning all theological and moral questions; if our ideas are confused concerning these things, we shall constantly be liable to be wrong. Ignorance, in any respect, is destructive of happiness, and more especially when applied to the Bible. To be ignorant of its teachings, is to live in total darkness, and to be the dupe of every impostor. You should remember that "ignorance is the parent of vice," that it gives rise to more than one half the evils with which mankind is afflicted. And you should bear in mind, that it is an exceedingly difficult matter to be practically right, and theoretically wrong on any moral or theological question.

To have correct ideas of the various objects with which we are surrounded in the natural world, of its government, and of the general and special providence of God; to have proper conceptions of the philosophy of the human mind, its

power to reason, its capacity to understand and enjoy, we must understand the Scriptures. The voice of nature is never heard where the Bible is unknown. In countries where the Bible is not, God is excluded from the government of the world. "To them," who are destitute of its teachings, "it appears that one event happens to all. One nation rises, and another falls; and every occurrence is either attributed to chance, to blind fate, or to the caprice of deities without wisdom, and without mercy." "But wherever the living oracles come, there every star, and mountain, and river, proclaims its glorious Maker."

It is by reading and understanding the Scriptures, that we are enabled to perceive clearly, the distinction between good and evil.

What does mere human philosophy, unaided by the light of revelation, teach on this subject? How little did Plato and Socrates, Seneca and Solon, the illustrious Grecian sage, know of right and wrong? They were surrounded "by palpable darkness. Their glimmering rays of reason only made the darkness more visble, and confusion more confused."

The most that such men could do was to guess that some things were to be avoided as being evil in their tendency, and that other things might be done as being conducive to the happiness of man. We have our philosophers and wise men at the present day, who profess to teach men the good and the right way. Their minds seem to penetrate the secrets of nature, and to comprehend every thing that comes within their range. But when they leave the light of divine truth, all is darkness and confusion. Man, left to himself, never could have had correct ideas, either of good or evil. At every step through life, he would have been doubting and hesitating as to the course to

be pursued. But the Bible comes to us clothed with divine authority, and points with unerring certainty to the path which leads to present and eternal happiness.

This idea is beautifully illustrated by Mr. Watson when he says: "Were we traveling in a foreign country, the very fruits of which were unknown to us; suppose some were poisonous and some good for food; and often that which was the most sightly and inviting to the eye was the most injurious; should we deem it any thing but an act of kindness in some inhabitant of the country to instruct us in the difference, and thus guard us from danger, and minister to our security and enjoyment? God has done this for us. He hath in his word written on every thing about us, 'this is good,' or 'that is evil.' And when he enjoins us to choose life, his authority is mercy: that rule is the tenderest love."

But, then, you should read and understand the Bible, that you may not be imposed upon by those who profess to be wise, and to be capable of teaching others what to do, when really they have but little regard for the Bible, and less for the welfare of man.

There are now, as there were in the days of the apostles, a great many false teachers in the world. They are either ignorant of the Bible, or have some evil design in view, which leads them to depart from its precepts. Their principal object is to lead men astray; and unfortunately for the young men of this country, in many instances, they are but too successful. They profess to teach the truth, and nothing but the truth, and yet they "lie in wait to deceive" those whose minds are not well fortified by the influence of divine truth.

In fact, there is a class of divines in this country, as well as in various other portions of the

world, who make great pretensions to learning and piety, (we need not name the sect to which they belong,) and profess to teach the way of God perfectly, and yet it is evident, from all their movements, that they designedly teach that which is false, and, as far as they can, hide the truth from the minds of the people. Look well to this matter, and remember that the Bible is a sure defense against all false doctrines, and is a sure guide to truth. Make yourself familiar with its teachings; and, in all difficult questions, let the following be your motto: "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to these words, it is because they have no light in them."

Man may err in judgment, and thereby pursue the wrong course; he may teach false doctrines, and thereby lead many astray; but that young man who takes the Bible for his guide, may feel assured that he is walking in the light of truth; and that, if he will be governed by its dictates, it will illuminate his mind, rectify the judgment, give a new bias to the will and affections, shield him from the ruinous influences of error and imposition, and guide him at last to the land of eternal rest.

But finally, on this point, young men should read the Bible, because it reveals to them every thing which bears directly or indirectly upon their present happiness and future well-being.

"It reveals to us the true knowledge of the nature, perfections and will of God. It reveals to us the knowledge of man's original condition, his primeval state, his fall, and consequent misery and ruin. It reveals to us the way of our recovery by the intervention of the Lord Jesus Christ, as the Savior of the world. It reveals the character, offices, work and doctrines of the Redeemer. It reveals clearly the way of salvation. It reveals

to us the doctrines of the resurrection of the dead, and of an eternal state of future existence. It reveals the glories of the heavenly world as the dwelling-place of the righteous for ever. It reveals a place of future woe as the punishment of the impenitent and ungodly."

It really seems to us that this last reason should be enough to induce any young man to read the Scriptures, not only with care, but, also, with delight, if there was no other reason that could be assigned. Contemplate the condition of those who, in regard to all the points enumerated in the above extract, have not the light of revelation to guide them. Their minds are filled with doubts. To them the future is all a mystery. Their minds are enveloped in the darkness of superstition. They are slaves to their own passions; have nothing to console them in their hours of distress and misfortune, nor to point them to a better state of existence.

But you should ever remember, that if your privileges and advantages are superior to those who are without a revelation from God, that your responsibilities are proportionally great. If you have the word of life in your hands, and are at last found in your sins, your account will indeed be terrible.

But we design noticing briefly the grounds upon which many young men try to excuse themselves for not reading the Scriptures, and wish to show, at the same time, that such excuses are entirely without foundation.

We are told, by some of them, when we urge upon them the importance of reading the Bible, that the style in which it is written is out of date; that it is simply a dry detail of facts and occurrences, in which they feel but little interest; and, also, that there is nothing in it which is

poetical, lofty and grand; and, therefore, they become tired while perusing its pages.

We reply, first, that the design of the Divine Being, in giving us a revelation of his will, was not simply to amuse the mind and please the fancy, to gratify our curiosity, or to interest us by the beauty and sublimity of its style, but to enlighten the mind in matters of the greatest possible importance to man. It was to affect the heart; to subdue the passions; to inform the judgment; to elevate the affections; to regulate the desires and conduct; and, in a word, to guide man into all truth.

But, after all, we remark that there is no book in the world which has a greater variety of style than is to be found in the Bible; and as for beauty, purity and clearness, it is unsurpassed. The most interesting and touching narratives in the world are to be found in the Bible. Read, for example, the narrative of Joseph being sold by his brethren; carried into Egypt; being made known to his brethren; and where will you find any thing equal to it?

And as to the poetry of the Bible, it surpasses, by comparison, any thing that can be found in the writings of our most celebrated poets, whether of ancient or modern times. If you have the opportunity, and will examine some specimens as selected by Bishop Lowth and others from the writings of the prophets, you will perceive that nothing can be found in the writings of Milton, Shakspeare, Young, Scott, or any other uninspired poet, that is to be compared with them.

"Poetry and elegance have ever found their finest models in the Scriptures, and the loftiest genius has not been ashamed to borrow its inspiration from them. It is not undeserved homage to this sacred book to say, that philosophers and

great men of other times lighted their torch in Zion, and the altars of learning caught their first spark from the flame that gleamed within her temple."

But others tell us that they can not understand the Bible when they read it, from the fact, that it contains a great many mysteries.

But if you object to the Bible on this account, you may object to every book which treats of science, upon the same ground. There are mysteries connected with almost every thing, both in the natural and spiritual world. And the fact that the Bible contains some passages which are a little mysterious, is no reason why they should be neglected by us. If the Bible contains some passages which the most cultivated minds can not fathom, it is strong evidence of its divinity, and we should be induced by this consideration, to read it the more carefully.

A great deal of truth, as revealed in the Bible, lies on the surface of the sacred page, and may be easily understood by all. That individual who has the most unlearned and untutored mind, need not be at a loss to discover the duties that he owes to God and to his fellow-beings. There are other portions, however, which can not be correctly understood without study and reflection, without a considerable degree of mental labor. And shall a young man study year after year to become master of the dead languages, to comprehend the most intricate parts of science and philosophy; and then neglect to read the Bible because its meaning, in a few instances, can not be perceived at a mere glance? And especially when we consider that worldly knowledge is the object in one instance, and that divine knowledge is, or should be the object, in the other? We leave the reader to answer this question.

That portion of the Bible which may be easily

understood by proper attention, will always be mysterious to the mind of that individual who neglects to read and study it. The safest and best way for a young man to get over the difficulties referred to in this proposition, is to read the Bible with a strong desire to come to a knowledge of the truth; and very soon he will discover that although some portions of it are hard to be understood, more can be learned from it than from any other book in the world.

Other young men excuse themselves for not reading the Bible, upon the ground, that it points out all their faults and imperfections, and brings them vividly before their minds.

There are thousands of young persons who deliberately refuse to read the Bible, to examine the sacred Scriptures, from this consideration only.

On this ground, we remark, many rejected Christ and his doctrines during his stay on the earth. Hence we hear him exclaim, upon a certain occasion, "light is come into the world, but men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil." And again, "they will not come to the light lest their deeds should be reproved."

Among all the excuses which have been, or can be named, this certainly has the least semblance of reason. For to us it really seems that a stronger reason for reading the Bible could not be presented, than the one which is here brought as an excuse for not doing so.

The world is full of deception. And left to its teachings, man is ignorant of himself, and the lofty principles by which he should be governed. We should delight in reading the Bible then, not only because it tells us what to do, but because it points out our faults, and shows us how to avoid them. In a thousand ways we may be deceived. Learning and science; the world with its charms and

allurements; false teachers by their flattery; our nearest friends by winking at our faults, and even our own hearts may deceive us; but the Bible never does.

This is one of the reasons why it should be dearer to us than any other book in the world, and read with more care and attention. It comes to all men alike, and leaves no sin unreproved. It does not flatter the king upon his throne, and censure those who are in the humble walks of life. No. It says to the statesman and philosopher, to the rich and to the poor, to all every where, you are sinful, dying mortals. And your only hope for eternal life, is an humble trust in God, through the merits of his Son.

And shall we refuse to read the Bible, because it tells us in plain terms of our faults? Suppose you were guilty of some error which was calculated to ruin your character, your standing in society, and your fortune in the world; and you, at the same time, were ignorant of the fact. Would you not esteem that man as a friend who would tell you of this error, and thereby give you an opportunity to avoid it in future? This is what the Bible does for every man. And from this consideration, if from no other, we should carefully peruse its pages, whatever else we may neglect or leave undone.

Finally, on this point, young persons endeavor to excuse themselves for not reading the Scriptures upon the ground, that they have not the time to do so. Some of them go so far as to say that their business engagements are such, that they are justifiable in neglecting them altogether.

And is it not strange, that any young man who believes that the Scriptures reveal to us the will of God, the duties which we owe to him, the path which leads to happiness in this life, and to im-

mortality beyond the grave, should urge, as his principal excuse, that he has no time to read them? Time for what? Why he has no time to study the will of the great sovereign of the universe. No time to study the history of the Savior of the world; to study the plans of salvation as revealed in the Gospel; to study the philosophy of that religion which raises man from a state of wretchedness and misery, to a state of joy and peace; to study how to live, and how to die; nor to study the map of that delightful country where the angels dwell, and to which many of our friends are gone. O, how strange, how inconsistent! Time for amusement and pleasure, time for business pursuits, time for fashion and folly, time to enjoy the pleasures of sin, time to associate with the wicked and with the unprincipled, time to study the arts and sciences, time to read newspapers and study politics, time to read novels, love stories, and all the light and trashy productions of a wicked age, and yet no time to read the Holy Scriptures. O, will not the young men of this country reconsider this proposition!

How sad the reflection, that there are many young persons who so employ themselves, "in the various concerns of the present life," that they have but little leisure to study, examine, and meditate upon the truth which God has revealed in his word! There are many to be found of whom we might have expected better things, who, in regard to the Bible and religion generally, are nearly as ignorant as when they left Sabbath School, or laid aside their catechism. But we still hope and pray for a better state of things in this country.

Various other obstacles to a proper examination of the scriptures might have been noticed, but it is time to bring our remarks on this subject to a close. We had intended noticing, also, some of

the results of reading the Bible attentively; but as this part of the subject has already, to some extent, been anticipated, we think it unnecessary to call it up again.

A few practical observations, and we leave the subject with the reader.

If you would have correct views of religion and morality—if you would know how to act in all the vicissitudes of life—if you would be guided, in all your worldly pursuits and business transactions, by the highest authority, you must have a knowledge of the Bible. Useful information may be gained from other books, and from other sources. We are not unmindful of this important fact; but, after all, this is second-hand knowledge. The Bible is the source and fountain of that light and knowledge which guides men to real and substantial happiness.

Some of the greatest men that the world ever saw have been the greatest students of the holy scriptures, and willingly confessed that a knowledge of them was indispensable, not only to a life of piety, but to the proper management of things pertaining to this life. Of this class we may mention Bayle, Burnet, Locke, Sir Isaac Newton, Addison, Rollins, Watson, Dick, and a host of others, who, amid all their other studies, professional calls, and business transactions made it a point to secure sufficient time to read and study diligently the holy Scriptures.

You, young men, are just starting into the same world through which they have just passed, to engage in its busy scenes, to meet with similar besetments, the same temptations, the same disappointments, and, probably, the same misfortunes. And if they found, after many years of experience, with all their learning and wisdom, that nothing but the Bible is a sufficient guide to men,

how can you expect to succeed without a knowledge of its teachings?

There will be no period in your future history, let your days be few or many, but what you will be better prepared to act your part wisely, both in regard to yourself and others, by having a knowledge of the Bible, than you possibly could to be destitute of such knowledge.

"Life lies before you, young man, all gleaming and flashing in light of your early hopes, like a summer sea. But, bright though it seem in the silvery sheen of its far-off beauty, it is a place where many a sunken wreck and many a treacherous quicksand have made shipwreck of immortal hopes. And calm though its polished surface may sleep, without a ripple or shoal, it shall yet be overhung to you by the darkness of the night, and the wildness of the tempest. And ah! if in these lonely and perilous scenes of your voyage, you were left without a landmark or a beacon, how sad and fearful your lot. But, blessed be God, you are not. For upon the Rock of Ages there streams a light from the Eternal Word, the light that David saw and rejoiced; the light that Paul saw and took courage; the light that has guided the ten thousand times ten thousand that have already reached the happy isles of the blest. There it stands, the Pharos of this dark and stormy scene, with a flame that was kindled in heaven, and that comes down to us reflected from many a glorious image of prophet, apostle and martyr. Many a rash and wicked spirit has sought to put out this light, and on the pinion of reckless daring has furiously dashed itself against it, but only fallen stunned and blackened in the surf below. Many a storm of hail and fury has dashed wildly against it, covering it for a time with spray, but when the fiercest shock has spent

its rage, and the proud wave rolled all shivered and sullenly back, the beacon has still gleamed on high and clear, above the raging waters. Another storm is now dashing against it, and another cloud of mist is flung around it, but when these also have expended their might, the rock and the beacon shall be unharmed still. 'We have a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts.' When this promised time shall have come, when the dappling dawn shall have broadened and brightened into the perfect day, then, and not until then, shall the light of this sure beacon pale before the brightness of that day, whose morning is heaven, and whose noontide is eternity. But, until then, in spite of the false lights that flash upon our track, and gleam fitfully from billow to billow, our steady gaze and our earnest heed shall be to this sure word of prophecy, and the motto we shall ever unfurl to the winds shall be, '*the Bible, the Bible, the lighthouse of the world.*'"—*Evi. Chris.*, page 301.

LECTURE XVI.

ON THE SABBATH.

A MAJORITY of the people of this country are fully satisfied that the Sabbath was divinely instituted, and feel themselves under special obligations to keep it holy. And it is thought by many of our most distinguished divines and theologians, as well as moral philosophers, that if it had not originated in the command of the Creator, it probably would have originated with man as a matter of utility and necessity.

Be this as it may, we are fully persuaded, that whatever may be the sentiments of the people in this country in regard to the law of the Sabbath, there is a growing tendency among them to neglect the requirements of this law. But a few years ago, the ministers of our holy religion, both in Europe and America, in their sermons and lectures, in their teachings, both private and public, were particularly careful to enforce upon the minds of the people the importance of observing the Sabbath as a day of rest from the ordinary cares of life, and from the perplexities of worldly business; and, as is always the case under similar circumstances, their labors among the people, in this respect, were not in vain.

But, of late years, ministers seem to overlook, not the importance of the Sabbath as a day of rest, but the importance of urging the people, from time to time, to spend that day in the fear and service of God. And the result is, at least in this country, and we suppose it is the case in all other countries where this matter is neglected, that the

people have become careless about the law of the Sabbath and the teachings of the Bible generally, as to the mode of passing it.

We find many persons in this country who have read and heard so little about the necessity of keeping the Sabbath day holy, about the manner in which it should be spent, that they seem not to realize the difference between the duties of this day and those of any other day in the week. And if they, on this day, suspend their ordinary occupations, and do not engage in any worldly pursuit, it is not so much from the fact that they believe it to be contrary to the revealed will of God to engage in such business on that day, but because the civil law will not allow them to do so. Here we may perceive the reason why so many persons engage in ordinary business transactions on this day, when they can do so without being observed by those whose business it is to execute the civil law. They are ignorant of the law of God, and of the rules and regulations which he has laid down in his Word in regard to this matter; and was it not for the influence of the civil law, their conduct, on this day, would not differ from the course of conduct pursued by them on any other day in the week.

A few individuals are to be found in this country who maintain that it does not appear, from any thing that is said in the Bible on this subject, and especially in the New Testament Scriptures, that the law regarding the Sabbath is obligatory upon man at the present day; and that one day should be kept as sacred as another. They admit that the Jews, by express command of God, were bound to keep the Sabbath day holy; and that they could not violate this command with impunity. But, then, they maintain, that this law is no where enjoined by Christ on his apostles.

To such we reply, that the law regarding the Sabbath had been written by the finger of God, upon tables of stone, and delivered to the Jews, long before the days of Christ, and that law has never yet been repealed; and, therefore, it was unnecessary for Christ or his Apostles to reënact a law which had been in existence for more than a thousand years. We remark, in addition to this, "that the observance of the Sabbath was not first enjoined at the giving of the law to Moses, but was instituted at the creation of the world, and became obligatory upon all the posterity of Adam, whether Jews or Gentiles, and a pledge of the kindness and good will of God to them." "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." The Sabbath was not made for any particular nation or race of people, but for the whole human family.

We remark, furthermore, in the language of Mr. Watson, "that if the religious observance of one day in seven was necessary to man in his state of innocence, that he might be called from the lighter employments of dressing and keeping the garden, when no examples were near him, it is much more necessary for us to be carefully observant of that sacred day, who are in so much the greater danger of forgetting God through the influence of the manifold anxieties of life, and the more powerful circumstances of temptation in which we are placed." But one remark made by Christ should, we think, put this matter to rest in the mind of any individual who supposes that we are not now under obligations to keep the Sabbath day holy. Said he, "The Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath day." Now it is perfectly unreasonable to suppose that he would claim to be Lord of that which did not exist. We sometimes fear that all disputes on this subject, upon the part

of those who deny the divine obligation of Christians to observe the Sabbath, are more from the heart than from the judgment.

But the question is often asked, "How is it that we now observe the Sabbath on the first day of the week, and not on the seventh?"

To this we reply, that we know of no answer to this question which is more appropriate, and, at the same time, more logical and conclusive, than that given by Mr. Watson in his "Conversation." Says he, "this change of the day is to be traced up to the age of the Apostles, and must, therefore, be referred to their inspired authority. The first day of the week had this honor put upon it as being the day of the Lord's resurrection from the dead. The substance of the law of the Sabbath, as found in the law of the ten commandments, which the Apostles repeatedly declare to be still obligatory upon Christians, is the observance of *one day in seven*. The day itself is a circumstance; but even this circumstance was not left to private individuals to determine. The Sabbath was ordained for public as well as private worship, and it was necessary that it should be observed by the whole community at the same time. The divine legislator of the Jews, therefore, specially directed that the first Sabbath kept in the wilderness should be calculated from the first day on which the manna fell; and, among Christians, apostolic authority fixed it upon the first day of the week, and gave it the expressive appellation of THE LORD'S DAY."

Having made these general remarks on the observance of the Sabbath, we will notice, more especially, some things which are to be avoided by all who wish to spend this day in accordance with the teachings of the Bible.

We notice, first, that all ordinary labor should be carefully avoided on this day.

To decide correctly in our minds what may or may not be done on that day, it would be proper for us, as nearly as we can, to understand the great object which our Creator had in view at the time the Sabbath was instituted and blessed.

The object contemplated on the part of Deity, at the time that "the Sabbath was made for man," seems to have been, that man might have time for reflection, for religious meditation, for the worship of God, and for the contemplation of those things which have a tendency to elevate the thoughts and affections of man to that which is spiritual and eternal in its character.

Hence any thing which tends to check devotional feelings, to prevent us from worshiping God "in spirit and in truth," and to hinder those exercises which bring us into communion with the father of our spirits, must be avoided. Well if our thoughts, on this day, are occupied by the concerns of the world, and engaged in the transactions of worldly business, we shall have but little time for religious meditation or worship.

It would be difficult to set down a set of rules, on this subject, which would suit every case, in view of the various and ever-varying circumstances with which men are surrounded.

Many are to be found, in this country, who, although they profess to have great regard for the sanctity of the Sabbath, find it a hard matter to avoid "doing their own ways" on that day. It is true, they wish to make the impression that they would do nothing which would be a violation of the law of the Sabbath, and yet it may be observed during the week, that they are making arrangements for something to be done on the next Sab-

bath, which is to be profitable to them temporally, and in the mean time wish to make it appear that it is a work of necessity.

That gentleman, for instance, who has produce to send to market, will start his teams at such a time in the week that it will be necessary for them either to lay by during Sabbath, or to travel on that day, in order to return home. And yet, it would have been just as convenient to have started those teams earlier in the week, that they might have had sufficient time to return home and rest on that day. Merchants will sell goods to servants on the Sabbath day, under the plea of necessity, when it would be an easy matter to induce their masters to allow them time, on any other day, to purchase such articles as they need. The physician arranges to visit a number of patients on Sabbath, during the hours for religious worship, when he could have visited them some other hour, and have accomplished the same amount of good. And so of all other professions and trades. A vast amount of labor is performed on the Sabbath day, under the plea of necessity, which might easily be avoided, and at the same time, no one would be injured, temporally speaking, while to avoid such things, many might be blessed in a spiritual point of view.

With but few exceptions, all persons believe it to be their duty to visit the sick, and to minister to their wants as occasion may require. And yet it is, with few exceptions, the universal practice of the people in this country, to attend to their worldly business during the week, and visit the sick on the Sabbath. Now when this is done with the intention of saving time, it is decidedly wrong. Nearly as much so, indeed, as if they were to visit the sick during the week, and attend to their ordinary business on the Sabbath, were it not for the

influence of example in pursuing such a course. If we cease to labor on the Sabbath simply because the civil law forbids it, and rest on that day, not because God has commanded it, not because "it is delight unto us," but because we are not allowed to do otherwise, we need not expect to be benefited in so doing.

Now we know that there are circumstances under which we may attend to what may be termed ordinary business on the Sabbath day, and yet not be looked upon as violating the sanctity of that day. This is sufficiently indicated by the Savior of the world when he asks the question, "Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the Sabbath?" Here we see that any work, which is really a work of necessity, may be performed by us on the Sabbath. A merchant, who refuses to trade on this day, may sell clothing to an individual who, by accident or some sudden call, is destitute of necessary clothing. "A builder might prop a falling wall, but not proceed in the erection of a house," and so on. All persons are left to judge for themselves, whether this or the other call may be attended to, consistently with the rules laid down by Christ and his apostles regarding the Sabbath.

If persons would, on the Sabbath, attend to those things only which may be lawfully attended to, and avoid all unnecessary labor, they would generally have time for reading and religious meditation. But because the Savior of the world, in his teachings, allowed works of necessity to be performed on that day, there are thousands who take the liberty of performing any kind of labor, if they can make it profitable to themselves. And thus it is, that they wrest the words of the Savior from their legitimate meaning when he says, "If

any of you have a sheep that falleth into the ditch on the Sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, and pull it out? A colored man once remarked, in commenting upon this passage of Scripture, "that it was not right to lift a sheep out of the ditch on the Sabbath day, if you have been trying all the previous week, to drive it into the ditch." And we have often thought this a good illustration of this passage which is so often brought forward by those who do not have a sufficient regard for the sanctity of the Sabbath.

Again, there are quite a number of persons to be found, who, on the Sabbath day, allow their servants and beasts to rest, and all farming operations to stand still; or who close the doors of their shops, their office, or business-house, as the case may be, and yet they may be seen walking over their farms, drawing plats, and making calculations as to the probability of success in their farming operations for the year; or may be found in their counting-rooms casting up accounts, calculating the sums lost, or profits made during the previous week; or, on the other hand, their minds intently engaged in arranging some plan for their future operations. Now it may be possible for such men to do so, and yet maintain a devotional frame of mind, but we think it exceedingly doubtful.

But let us admit that they can carry with them, in the transaction of such business on the Sabbath, all their religious sentiments and feelings, which we think is impossible, their children and neighbors may be induced by their example to do the same things without any effort to be in a religious frame of mind while attending to such business. Hence, the individual who attends to matters of a temporal character on the Sabbath, which might be avoided, however trivial as to their importance, may be doing serious injury to others,

however innocent he may be as to any intention of doing wrong.

To say the least of such a course, then, it would be much better employment for such persons to be found reading their Bibles, or some other good book which would lead them to think of their responsibility to their Creator, and their obligations to serve him. And when such persons have the opportunity, let them go to the sanctuary of God. Here it is, on this day, they may hear something, if they are inclined to lay up treasures on earth, which may cause them to lose confidence in the stability of earthly things. However vigorous and youthful such persons may feel, they may hear something which may cause them to think of disease and death, and of a coming judgment. And all will leave the place of worship better prepared for the duties and besetments of life, than if they had stayed away.

But again, we should avoid all worldly amusements, and trips for recreation on this day.

Things which may be done quite innocently on any other day, may be quite sinful when done on this.

It may be observed, that young persons in this country are getting very much in the habit of collecting together on this day, and taking pleasure trips, little excursions, voyages, and the like; and many of them spend nearly all their Sabbaths in this way. The consequence is, they have but little time for serious thoughts or religious meditation. Others spend their Sabbaths in reading amusing anecdotes, novels, love stories, secular newspapers, books of travels; or such as give an account of startling events, hair-breadth escapes, and the like; but scarcely ever read religious books, or books of any kind, from which useful information might be obtained. Still another class

of young persons meet together at some noted place in their neighborhood, to amuse each other by their witticisms, odd sayings and vulgar language; or by making a display of their ability to discuss the various political questions of the day; or by wrestling, boxing, playing marbles, cards, checquers, or something else as bad, if not worse than any thing which we have named, and seem never to think of spending this holy day in the fear and service of their Creator.

Now let all young persons contrast this method of spending the Sabbath with that which is pointed out by one of the inspired prophets, where he says, "If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day: and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shalt honor him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.—*Isaiah*, 58 chap. 13, 14 verse.

We leave the young reader to answer the following question for himself:—Will it be better for him in life, in death, and in eternity, to spend the Sabbath in pursuit of worldly and sinful pleasure, or according to the direction given here by the inspired prophet?

Again, vanity and pride, though always sinful, are to be carefully avoided on this day.

All attempts to make a display of ourselves, or of any thing which we possess, on this day, is sinful; from the fact that in so doing, we are sure to violate the law of God in regard to it.

To see the force of this last remark, we have only to remember that pride always leads to ex-

travagance, and extravagance leads to unnecessary labor, and this to a neglect of the important duties that we should perform on that day.

See that young man who, during the past week, has purchased for himself a fine horse, and elegant equipage for the same; also a fine suit of clothing for himself, all arranged according to the latest style. He goes to church on the next Sabbath, it may be, spends there the hour set apart for divine service; and, it may be that he formally engages in the services of the hour; but all the time his thoughts are occupied about himself, his appearance, the impression he is making upon the minds of those around him; and how he is to manage so as to succeed in attracting their attention.

We do not say of this young man that he had better stay away from church, than to go there and spend his time in this way; but we do say that it would be much better for him if he would go quietly, and without any attempt at display, to the sanctuary of God, and engage earnestly in religious exercises, and let his thoughts be occupied about his moral condition, and his destiny beyond the grave. Let these remarks serve as an illustration of many other things which might be said on this subject.

In the last place, on this point, visiting, as a source of gratification, should be strictly avoided on this day.

Now, visiting the sick, the poor, and the distressed may be done on this day, if it is necessary for us to do so, in order to relieve their wants. But this is quite different from visiting as a matter of time-serving, or as a source of pleasure. It is visiting for the latter purpose which should be avoided. There are many young persons, as well as old, in this country, who seem not to think of visiting their friends and neighbors on any other

day except the Sabbath; and their only reason for doing so is, that they are too busy on any other day. Their minds and bodies, during the week, are occupied about their business concerns; hence, they select, for this purpose, the time which has been set apart especially for religious exercises. There are thousands of persons in this land of Bibles and gospel privileges, who spend most of their Sabbaths in this way. And we have often thought that if such persons would reflect seriously on the impropriety of their conduct in this respect, that they surely would avoid it in the future.

Look for a moment at the consequences. Those who visit on this day, deprive themselves, to a great extent, of reading and meditating profitably, and of those devotional feelings which they might otherwise enjoy, if they would quietly remain at home; and those visited by them are thrown into the same condition, and that, too, it may be, against their will; for they, on this day, may greatly prefer to be free from company, that they may have time for reflection; time to think of the solemn realities of eternity. And now, when we add to this, that servants, as a natural consequence, are more closely confined and engaged than they should be on this day, and thereby deprived of privileges which they should enjoy, we think it enough to induce any man who will reflect as he should about the evils of this practice, to avoid it altogether.

We might here, if we had time, speak at some length of those who spend this day fishing, hunting, gaming, traveling, and the like; but these things are so manifestly wrong, and so much at variance with the teachings of the Bible as to the manner in which this day should be spent, that it is wholly unnecessary for us to say any thing by

way of trying to make it more plain. Surely no individual, who reads the Bible attentively, will pretend to justify himself in doing such things on the Sabbath day.

We notice, in the next place, some things that should be done on this day. A few remarks must suffice.

First, we remark, that serious reflection is a very important duty to be performed on the Sabbath. It is the duty of all men to spend at least a portion of this day in this way.

We should reflect calmly upon our present condition. A chain of reflections, something like the following, should pass through our minds on every Sabbath; and these should not be allowed to pass without leaving some good impression. What portion of my time has been spent in the service of God? How much wrong have I done by my example and influence? In what manner could I have spent my time, that it might have been more profitable to myself and to others in a moral point of view? Have I better control of myself, my passions, temper, appetites, than I have had heretofore? Am I better prepared to contend with the temptations of the world, and to walk in the path of rectitude and obedience? And then, as to others: How is it with the community in which I live? Is it improving in morals, or is it growing worse? Can I do any thing to benefit those around me, to elevate their condition morally, intellectually, and spiritually? Can I do any thing that will lead men to forsake the path of vice, and walk in the path of virtue? If so, what is it, and how shall it be done?

Then, again, we should reflect that we are in a state of probation; that we are transacting business for eternity; and that, for all we say and do in this life, we shall have to give account at

the judgment bar of God. We should reflect that our happiness in a future state, and, to some extent, the happiness of others, depends upon the course which we pursue in the present life. Thus should we reflect on the Sabbath day. If not on that day, when then? The young may reply that old age is the time for such solemn reflections. We answer, that to thousands of young persons old age will never come. Hence, if they neglect this duty while young, it is very probable that they will never attend to it.

Another duty which should be carefully attended to on this day, is the public worship of God.

Every individual, whether he be a professed Christian or not, should, on this day, if he has the opportunity, attend some place that is set apart for the worship of the Most High. Impressions are often made upon our minds in the sanctuary of God, calculated to make us better citizens, better neighbors, and better men, which never would be made at any other place, or under any other circumstances. Said one who had paid a great deal of attention to this subject, "The public worship of God is the ancient and the sure guardian of human happiness; do not trifle with it as if it were of no avail. Justice, and faith, and mercy, and kindness flow from the altars of God. It is here that men learn to pity; it is here that they are taught to forgive; it is here that they learn punctuality in contracts, obedience to magistrates, submission to superiors, respect for laws, loyalty to kings; and there, above all, it is, that they catch the true spirit of the Gospel, which, meliorating all things, makes submission to superiors voluntary, by rendering superiors gracious; respect for laws natural, by making laws just; the loyalty to kings pleasant, by making kings good."

No man can regularly attend the place for reli-

gious worship on this day, without being benefited to a greater or less extent, unless he is actuated, in so doing, by some improper motive. Nor can he neglect to do so, without becoming a worse man, although he may not, owing to this neglect, be able to see that he is growing worse.

In conclusion, we would say, to the young especially, that if you neglect the duties of the Sabbath, and refuse to keep it holy, you have no assurance of divine protection, nor of the blessing of God upon your efforts, either in a temporal or spiritual point of view, nor of entering, at last, into the abodes of the blest, around the throne of God. Follow not the example, then, of Sabbath profaners. Learn to spend this day in the fear of God. Remember the fearful consequence of spending it in a trifling manner. The Divine Being will not allow his laws to be trampled upon with impunity.

The Jews, for a long time, as a nation, disregarded the laws of God respecting the Sabbath day, and he seemed to pay no attention to their conduct, at least so far as punishment was concerned. But when we remember that they, afterward, spent the same length of time in captivity, in Babylon, which they had formerly spent in desecrating the holy Sabbath, we can clearly see that it is a dangerous thing to trifle with, or to neglect the commands of God respecting it.

It may be that the calamities which we, as a nation, have had to endure, within the last few years, in the way of war, pestilence, and famine, have been sent upon us as a punishment for our neglect of the duties of this holy day. Be this as it may, every Sabbath that we spend, bears its report to the Judge of all the earth. And they will bear for us a good report, or render our account more terrible in that coming day.

LECTURE XVII.

A SERMON FOR THE YOUNG—ON THE NECESSITY OF DIVINE DIRECTION.

"Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory."—*Psalms, lxxiii:* 24.

It is evident from the language of the text, that the Psalmist was a firm believer in the doctrine of a particular or special providence. He advocates the doctrine that God not only upholds the world, and guides the affairs of nations and large communities, but that man, in an individual capacity, is as much the object of his care as the most imposing event that can happen, either to a nation or to the world. He taught that every individual who walks in the commandments of God, and puts his "trust under the shadow of his wings," might, with confidence, expect to be sustained by divine power, and directed by divine wisdom, however difficult his path, or formidable his enemies.

There are many persons at the present day, who profess not to believe this doctrine, on the ground that it is derogatory to the dignity and character of God; since it brings him down, in the execution of his plans, to a level with finite man. They maintain that if this doctrine be true, God is more liable to change than man himself. And that his plans and arrangements are always liable to be frustrated, from the fact that he must be doing and undoing perpetually, to suit the case of each individual. But we remark, that his general plans include individual cases. And, that it is just as easy for him to supply the wants of each individual

separately, as it would be for him to supply the wants of one man, if he stood alone in the world.

We should guard well against those philosophers, who would have us believe that the Bible nowhere teaches the doctrines of a particular or special providence; for it has its origin either in ignorance or unbelief.

There is a kind of philosophy which wears the garb of Christianity, which excludes the Creator, as an active and efficient agent, entirely from the affairs of men, and from all those events that transpire around us both in the natural and spiritual world; and leaves man to look to the full development of some great principle or plan, that was arranged at the creation of the world for assistance and direction in his hours of gloom, distress, and misfortune.

The advocates of this theory maintain that it is beneath the dignity of an all-wise Being to look upon human affairs; and that he is constantly employed in watching the affairs of the universe, and the events which affect the interests of nations. But whatever may be taught on this subject as the result of ignorance, unbelief, or false philosophy; this is not the doctrine of the text, nor, in fact, of any other portion of the Bible.

The reason why so many oppose or disbelieve the doctrine of a special providence, or that man is specially protected and guided in this life by the hand of infinite wisdom, is, that they have not made themselves familiar with the principles of the divine government as revealed in the Bible. They can not conceive how the Divine Being, though infinitely wise and powerful, can control the machinery of the universe, keep the earth, the air, the waters, together with all the heavenly bodies within their appointed bounds, and, at the same time, guide each individual inhabitant of the

earth and supply his wants by a special act, however widely he may be separated from the rest of his fellow-beings, or however peculiar the circumstances which may surround him. And as the ways of God, in this respect, are mysterious, past finding out, and beyond the reach of man to discover, they are disposed to disbelieve this doctrine altogether; and vainly attempt to explain those passages of holy writ, which explicitly set forth the doctrine of a special providence, upon some other principle. And often, too, according to some theory which is at variance with reason and common sense.

The fact, that some of the doctrines of the Bible are mysterious, as shown in another lecture, is no reason why they should be disbelieved. For if we make it a point to disbelieve, when we do not fully understand, we would soon be in doubts in regard to almost every thing. We can not tell, for example, how water satiates thirst, or how the sun shines; and yet, we do not doubt in regard to either proposition, however mysterious in its operation.

The faith of the Psalmist, in the doctrine of a special providence, was strong. His confidence in the ever-watchful care of God toward those who put their trust in him, was equally so. With him, the truth of this doctrine was a matter of experience. He knew that he was not mistaken, and that his confidence was not misplaced. He knew that there were circumstances connected with his own history, that could be explained upon no other principle than by referring them to the agency of an all-wise Being.

He had several times despaired of his own life when pursued by Saul, by his own son, and by the enemies of the hosts of Israel, and saw that there was no chance, by any plan which man could devise, for his deliverance. But that in every in-

stance, however improbable, according to human calculation, he had escaped with his life. How, then, we ask, could he doubt the truth of this doctrine? How could he do otherwise than believe, that, from the time God had delivered him from the power of the bear and the lion while he was taking care of his father's flocks in the days of his boyhood, up to the time that he used the language of the text, he had been the object of the special care of that Being who sees, and knows, and controls all things.

Many who deny the doctrine of a special, admit, at the same time, the doctrine of a general providence. They can see, or at least profess to see, how it is, and why it is that one nation becomes weak, and sinks to ruin; while another flourishes and becomes powerful, but can not tell why it is that this individual, though virtuous, lives in poverty and wretchedness; and the other, though he leads a life of vice and immorality, seems to enjoy all the blessings of life. Why one individual meets with a severe accident, while another, at the same time and place, and under similar circumstances, is uninjured. While really, it is just as easy to conceive how an all-powerful Being can protect an individual, as it is to understand how he guides and controls the interests of nations.

The Bible, after all the vain and idle speculations of men upon this subject, gives us the true philosophy, the only reliable and correct analysis of this doctrine. It teaches that there is a government of nations it is true, but it teaches, also, that there is a government of individuals. This is clear from the language of one of the inspired writers, where he asks, "When he giveth greatness, who then can make tremble; and when he hideth his face, who then can behold him, whether it be done

to a nation or to a man only?" Are nations, then, in a state of tranquillity? It is God that giveth them quietness. Do we see one individual in adversity, and another in prosperity? "He putteth down one, and setteth up another."

The Psalmist, in contemplating his past life, viewing the scenes through which he had passed in his childhood, the events of his riper years, the powerful influences which had been brought to bear upon his mind that he might be led to distrust the providence and goodness of God; and feeling that he was still the object of his care, says, "Thou hast holden me by my right hand." Then casting his eye toward the future, feeling that he was still dependent upon God for assistance, looking with fond anticipation to a world of light and joy beyond the scenes of mortal life, he says, in the impressive language of the text, "Thou shalt guide me by thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory."

In directing the attention of the young reader, for a time, to these words, we notice,

I. The necessity of divine direction.

II. The means by which it is given.

III. The great object in view, upon the part of Deity, in guiding man while he is in a state of probation.

I. The necessity of divine direction.

This will appear when we reflect that man is an imitative being. They are prone to imitate each other, and, in consequence of this, are liable to be led astray. Notice, as an illustration of this fact, the conduct of children, see how natural it is for them, in their hours of play and amusement, to imitate their parents, both in words and actions, and even other persons who are older and more experienced than themselves. This is so universally the case, that we scarcely ever see an excep-

tion. In addition to this, they have almost unlimited confidence in the judgment of their parents, and scarcely ever doubt as to the correctness of their views, or the morality of their conduct. If parents decide that any given proposition is right, it is very apt to be viewed in the same light by their children. And whatever may be the course pursued by parents, they are apt to be closely imitated by them.

But this is true, not only of children, but of those who have come to the years of maturity; and especially in matters which pertain to man's immortal interests. See that young man who, for the first time, feels that he is a sinner in the sight of God, that he is without hope and without God in the world, who is led to exclaim, in the language of one of old, "What must I do to be saved?" who has resolved, as did the prodigal son, to go to his father's house. What course does he now pursue? Does he go immediately to his Creator for help in this his time of need? Does he go to his word for light and instruction in this hour of gloom? These are the steps that he should take, for the Bible is man's only guide in matters of this kind; and it leads him directly to the fountain for sin and for all uncleanness. The Bible alone answers authoritatively the important question propounded above, and gives entire satisfaction to all who will consult it. But then, this young man must try something else; and what does he do? He looks around among those who profess to be governed by the principles of Christianity, and almost intuitively selects one as his guide, in whose judgment and piety he has the most confidence, and this man is to be his model.

He reasons thus, in regard to this matter: This man enjoys the divine favor, and walks in the light of God's countenance. He is freed from the

power and dominion of sin, and is now in the path which leads to life eternal; and I will imitate his example, be governed by his views and sentiments, walk in his footsteps, and make him my guide in all matters pertaining to my salvation; and surely, if he is right, I shall not be wrong. If he is a partaker of the divine nature, I shall share the same blessings. If he conquers the last enemy, and shouts victory in his last expiring moments, I shall be equally successful. And if he finally lives with the redeemed around the throne of God, I shall be among those who will join in singing the song of redeeming grace and dying love in the presence of God for ever.

Thousands of young men, from considerations like these, have followed, and are now following the example of their fellow-beings as a means of present and eternal happiness; but unfortunately for many of them, such guides will be their ruin. They have left the great source of light—the Bible—have closed their eyes to the indications of providence, and no longer listen to the calls of the Divine Spirit, and are following the example of those whose object, after all, may be to deceive others, and secure their own interest. Their hearts may be black with sin, and full of all iniquity.

Now, if all, who profess the religion of the Bible, were "steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord," it would be safe to follow them as guides. But oh! how unstable is man? To-day we hear him say, as did Peter, "I will follow thee to prison and to death;" but to-morrow, with bitter oaths, we hear him denying his master. To-day, with sword in hand, he defends his master, but to-morrow, filled with doubts and fears, he follows him at a distance. Thus it is with man; he is too uncertain, too much inclined to vacillate, to be a guide for others in matters of so much

importance. Well might the apostle say, on this subject, "They, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves with themselves, are not wise." The best and wisest men in all ages have, at times, turned aside from the good and the right way.

Here, then, we see the necessity of divine direction. The necessity of a light which shines more regularly, a guide that is always right, and points in the same direction.

Again, divine direction is necessary from the fact that man is a fallible being.

The wisest of men are liable to err in judgment and to do wrong. If man is left to himself, to be guided by his own judgment and reason, in matters pertaining to his salvation, he is very apt to "put light for darkness, and darkness for light;" and is almost sure to deviate from the path of uprightness.

This is true of all men. They may be honest with themselves and all others, and may earnestly desire to come to a knowledge of the truth; they may be willing to search for the right way, as for some hidden treasure; and yet there are so many sources of error in the world, so many things to blind the mind, and to hide the truth from their eyes, that if there is not some principal or agent to divest the mind of ignorance, and point out to them the path of duty, they are sure to have mistaken views of the character of God, mistaken views of themselves, of the world, of the plan of human redemption, and of the means by which they may enjoy the peace of God, and be prepared to live with him for ever.

But, in addition to this, men are not only *liable* to err, but *inclined* to do wrong. "Men love darkness rather than light." They love to enjoy the pleasures of sin, and are opposed to those influ-

ences, brought to bear upon their minds, to guide them in the way which leads to peace and holiness. He may even see his error; he may feel that he is pursuing a course which renders him unhappy, a course which is contrary to the dictates of his better informed judgment; he may see that there is a path less rugged and more easily traveled than the one he is pursuing; and yet, under the influence of sin, being governed by his passions, he will yield to that which he knows to be wrong; and, beside this, there are thousands of inducements presented to his mind, which tend directly to lead him into error's path.

The world presents its claims; infidelity, its sophistry; false philosophy, its deceptive errors; the voluptuary, his pleasing baits; and, last but not least, Satan, his delusions; all of which, when yielded to, are calculated to lead men to destruction. See that young man who has just come to the years of maturity. He is in possession of a principle which must live parallel with the existence of God; and the future destiny of that immortal principle depends upon his conduct while in the present state of existence. He is a fallible being, prone to be mistaken; he is a sinful being, inclined to do wrong. Now, if there is no divine influence exerted upon his mind; if there is no one "to hold him by the right hand" in all the vicissitudes of life; if that Being, who giveth wisdom to all who ask it of him, does not guide and sustain this young man by his power and wisdom, what must be the result? He will follow his own inclinations; walk on in darkness; live ind espair; and, finally, sink to eternal ruin. Said the prophet Jeremiah, while contemplating the condition of man, and his need of divine direction: "The way of man is not in himself. It is not in him that walketh to direct his steps."

But we shall perceive the necessity of divine direction, when we reflect that man is prone to Phariseeism, or to depend upon his own righteousness for salvation.

In every age of the church, from its organization down to the present period, man has been disposed to depend upon himself; to rely upon his own efforts; and, upon the performance of external duties, to recommend him to the divine favor.

Look at that Jew, as he disfigures his face, that he may appear unto men to fast; or as he stands at the corners of the streets of Jerusalem, and makes long prayers, that he may be seen of men. See him as he stands in the temple, and says: "God, I thank thee that I am not as other men—extortioners, unjust, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week; I give tithes of all that I possess." Upon what principle does he expect to realize the peace of God that passeth all understanding? He expects it alone upon the principle that he is externally righteous. He thinks not of the righteousness of the heart, nor of internal holiness; or if he did, it is not secured by going the round of external duties; such as fasting, formal prayers, and deeds of charity, which leave the heart untouched. True he desires the pardon of sin, but he is relying upon his own efforts as a means of securing it.

During Christ's stay upon earth, the people were so much inclined to look to outward circumstances as a means of salvation, that he cautioned them against it in almost all his discourses, whether public or private. On one occasion, we hear him ask: "Why call you me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" And again: "Many will say unto me, in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name; and, in thy name,

cast out devils; and, in thy name, done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." And why shall such be rejected on that day? Because they depended upon forms, and ceremonies, and external acts of devotion to give them an entrance into life eternal.

But is the case with man, in this respect, different at the present day? Not in the least. Many are now to be found whose only hope of heaven is, they belong to the visible church; have been baptized in the name of Christ; observe his Sabbaths; assemble at his ordinances; meet together in his name; support his cause; and supply the wants of the distressed; all of which may be done, and leave the principles of the mind unchanged, and the heart unaffected.

How important, then, that we should have divine direction! How important that some supernatural influence should be exerted on the mind, to discover to us that forms and ceremonies, however regularly attended to, will avail us nothing, if the heart is not right in the sight of God! To teach us that religion is designed to affect the heart, to control the desires and affections, to regulate the thoughts and feelings, and to call into active exercise all the intellectual and moral powers of the man, so that soul, body and spirit may be consecrated as a sacrifice to God.

Finally, on this part of the subject, we shall perceive the necessity of divine direction, when we consider the various systems and opinions which prevail among men respecting the means of salvation.

How many different systems of religion are to be found in the world, and what an infinite variety of opinions are entertained by different men!

There is probably a greater variety of views and

sentiments among men, in regard to the means to be used that we may enjoy the favor of God, than any thing else. The result is, there are sects and denominations of Christians almost without number. Each one, too, as a general thing, honestly and earnestly advocating and urging the claims of his peculiar creed. Let us suppose, then, that a young man is earnestly inquiring after the way of salvation, and that he is ignorant of the course that he should pursue; and let us suppose that he goes to the different teachers of religion for instruction. This one points in this direction; the other in that; while a third says to him, here is the way, walk ye in it. Now, we ask, will he not hesitate? Will he not begin to doubt? Is he not liable here to take the wrong course? Yes, he may do more than this in this hour of gloom; he may call in question the truth of the Christian religion; he may conclude, if left to himself, that all are wrong; that there is no reality in religion. He may go so far as to conclude that the Bible is "a cunningly devised fable," or else all would entertain the same opinions, and be traveling in the same direction.

Here again, we see the necessity of divine direction; of divine influence upon the mind, to enable us to see and to feel that whatever may be the opinions or condition of others, that we, while our hearts are renewed by the influence of divine grace, are wrong, and in the road which leads to death; to produce within a feeling of dissatisfaction, of discontent and uneasiness, until we yield ourselves to the commands of "the Holy One of Israel."

II. We notice in the second place, the means by which divine direction is given to man.

Here we remark, that God does not confine himself to any particular method, but has as many

ways as there are circumstances surrounding man in the present life. There is scarcely an object around us, or an event that transpires within the bounds of our observation, but what is calculated to teach us some important practical lesson, if we will pay proper attention to it. The term "counsel," however, as used in the text, refers, more especially, to the Word, to the Spirit, and to the Providence of God. These are the means generally used in giving man the instruction and direction necessary to his happiness.

God guides us by his word.

We remark that the word of God is of universal application, and is an infallible rule of faith and practice to all men. The learned and the wise may be mistaken, and the greatest teachers on earth may come to wrong conclusions, and point out the wrong path; but the Bible always points in the right direction. It guides us in all the relationships of life. In every condition, in every position that we may be called to occupy, we may find here suitable instruction.

Are some to rule and control the interests of others? They are to be "just, ruling in the fear of God." Are others so situated that it becomes necessary for them to submit to the authority of others? The language of inspiration is, "submit yourself to every ordinance of men for the Lord's sake; whether it be to the king, as supreme; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well." Are you a parent? "And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Are you still within the limits of parental control? "Children obey your parents in all things: for this is well-pleasing unto the Lord." Are you a master? "Give unto your

servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a master in heaven." Are you a servant? "Obey in all things your masters according to the flesh." Have you enemies? "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you." And do you wish to know how to act toward your fellow-beings generally? "Do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith."

This is true not only of individuals, but, also, of nations, and of the whole human family. All may find in the word of God suitable instruction; something to guide them in all the vicissitudes of life. And if, as a young man, you have had, and now have an opportunity of reading the Holy Scriptures, and are still ignorant of the path of duty, still following the inclinations of an evil heart, and are still in the road to death, you are without excuse. For the way in which we should walk is so plainly pointed out thereby, that "the wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err therein."

Again, God guides by his Spirit.

While the Word of God seems to have been given more especially to guide man in his external relations, the Spirit is given to inspire the heart with proper thoughts and affections, and to produce that feeling of dependence upon, and submission to God, which prompts us to look up to him as the source of happiness, and to be governed by him in all things pertaining to our salvation. This is the great object in view upon the part of Deity, when he sends the Divine Spirit to operate upon the human heart. It is by its soft, and silent, and yet powerful influences, to lead man in the path which is so plainly marked out

by the Word of God. This it does for all men, at every turn of life, if they will but yield to those influences; for "it takes of the things of Christ, and reveals them to us."

No matter what may be our preconceived notions, or how much we may oppose the Christian religion, or how much we may love the ways of sin, it reveals to us our condition; urges us to "depart from iniquity," and to obey the commands of God. Let us be where we may, in the wide waste, or in the city full, on the pathless ocean, or on the cloud-capt mountain-top, there is the Spirit of God, to enlighten the mind, to show us our danger on the one hand, and the way of safety on the other. In the darkest hours of distress, it is ever ready with its consolations to cheer the heart, and to urge us on in our journey to the skies.

In the last place, God guides us by his providence, and by his judgments.

It is true that some of the dispensations of his providence may be dark, and his judgments past finding out. They may, at present, be mysterious. But, though clouds and darkness are round about him, justice and mercy are the habitation of his throne. A vail may separate between us and his throne, and behind that vail he may transact the affairs of the universe, where no mortal eye can see him. We may look with astonishment at various events that transpire around us, and may wonder at the "pestilence which walketh in darkness," at the devastating storm as it sweeps away the habitations of men; we may wonder why it is that those who are yet young and may still be useful to their fellow-beings, are permitted so soon to fall victims to the monster death; while those who are worn down by age and affliction are permitted to remain so long in pain and sorrow;

these and a thousand other things may be beyond our comprehension.

But, after all, the design of an all-wise Being is, to teach man knowledge, and to show him the right path. And if he will pay proper attention to the operations of his hand, he will soon learn the important lesson which the Prophet had learned when he said, "When thy judgments are abroad in the land, the inhabitants thereof will learn righteousness." Most young men, however, pay but little attention to this branch of the divine administration. So careless are they in regard to it, that scarcely any impression is made upon their minds by any thing which may occur around them.

How strange! that after God has done so much to enlighten the mind of man, to elevate his moral condition, and to impart peace and joy to his heart, that he should treat his offers with contempt! And how sad the reflection, that so many who have the Word, and Spirit, and providence of God to guide them in the most difficult scenes of life, and, finally, to the shores of immortality, are rejecting the "counsel" of God, and seem determined to pursue a course that will lead them to eternal ruin.

III. Thirdly, the great object in view, upon the part of Deity, in guiding man while he is in a state of probation.

This object must be man's happiness in this world, and his final glorification.

One of the three following propositions must be true: God either designs that we shall be miserable, or he is indifferent as to our condition; or he desires our present happiness and eternal salvation. If we acknowledge that God is the Creator of all things, we are bound to admit one of these propositions.

The first can not be true; for if God had intended that man should be miserable, it would have been a very easy matter for him so to have made him. Every thing in the natural world would have been quite differently arranged. In the place of the sweetest harmony, for instance, every sound would have been a discord. That which is now most pleasing to the eye, and beautiful to behold, would have been loathesome in its appearance; while every touch would have produced the most painful sensation. But as this is not the case, as there are so many harmonious sounds, and beautiful scenes, and pleasurable sensations enjoyed by man, we must conclude that the design of an all-wise Being was not that he should be miserable.

Nor can it be said that he is indifferent as to our condition; for when we look around us we see that too much has been done, and is still being done for men, which goes to contradict such a statement. All nature seems to be working to man's advantage; and in ways almost innumerable is he invited to take a higher and still a higher stand, that he may enjoy more fully the blessings which his Creator has provided for him. In fact, scarcely one in a thousand can be found, who comes up to the standard of happiness which is attainable on earth, if man would but act his part.

Then the last proposition must be true; that is, God desires the happiness of his creature man. And the fact that he has given us a capacity to enjoy such things as are conducive to our happiness, and all the means of acquiring it, is evidence of the correctness of this position. In addition to this, he enlightens the mind of man, that he may have correct ideas as to the means of happiness; points out the way of safety in all the different departments of life; guides us by his counsel;

"holds us by the right hand;" and not only enables us to secure the largest amount of happiness that can be enjoyed in this life, but, at the same time, to anticipate the joys of the celestial world.

But you should observe that the words of the text implies, not only a willingness upon the part of Deity to guide man in the way of happiness, but a willingness upon the part of man to submit to his instruction and direction. The Psalmist says, "Thou shalt guide me," which implies, "I am willing to be guided by thee." As much as if he had said, "I will forsake the ways of sin, and all its pleasurable amusements; I will no longer follow my own inclinations; no longer trample upon thy laws; no longer resist the influence of thy grace and Spirit upon my heart; no longer neglect thy word; no longer be governed by the opinions and example of others; no longer be guided by the flickering lights held up by men, but thou shalt be my guide."

Pursuing a course of this kind, he now has a right to look to heaven as his future home. Hence he says, "Afterward (thou shalt) receive me to glory." "When I shall have walked long enough in thy ways; done all the work which thou hast assigned me; filled up my course among men; borne, with patience, the privations, misfortunes, and disappointments of life; when I, by pursuing the course which thou hast pointed out, shall have been sanctified by the influence of divine grace, and made fit meat for the master's use, then "thou shalt receive me to glory." Observe, the author of the text did not expect this without the necessary qualification. And he was willing to adopt those measures, and to use those means by which he might be qualified.

Let that young man, who has been raised by pious parents, taught the doctrines of the Bible

in the days of his childhood, and who understands the plan of salvation as revealed in the Gospel of Christ, remember that all these things will not prepare him for the glory referred to in the text, but that the heart must be brought under submission to the will of God.

Many who, in their early days, were religiously inclined, from the pious instructions which they received from their parents, have departed from the counsel of God, hardened themselves in wickedness, and now, with all their literary fame and scientific investigations, are in the road that leads to death. How important, then, that all young men should remember the divine injunction, "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy steps." The promise to such is, that they shall be received to glory.

But what is implied by the term glory? This we are unable to explain, or to comprehend fully. The author of the text, though he had a general idea of the meaning of this term, and used it appropriately, did not fully understand all that was meant by it. As used in the text, it may refer, literally, to the brightness and splendor that was visible, at certain times, in the tabernacle that was built by Moses in the wilderness, or to the same as witnessed by the Jewish high priests in the temple built by Solomon. Whatever else may be included in the meaning of this term, there is, doubtless, allusion to the bright manifestations of the divine presence to those around the throne of God.

In this land of sorrow, where the mind is darkened by sin, shrouded in ignorance, and blinded by the god of this world, we have but a faint conception of the glory of the eternal world. We may feel its power in our hearts, we may see that others realize its influence in life and in the hour

of death, but eternity alone can unfold to our minds all that is meant by being received into glory.

In conclusion, does the young reader desire, when the cares of life have passed away, to enter into glory? Who does not wish to live with the redeemed around the throne of God, and to be associated with the spirits of just men made perfect?

Such a desire is almost universal among those who have any idea of the heavenly world. And you, young man, though you may be thoughtless and prayerless, though you may be neglecting the teachings of the Bible, and resisting the influence of the divine spirit, you wish to live finally, in that bright world.

But bear in mind, that an entrance there can only be obtained by pursuing the course that David, the author of the text, did. In imagination, we see him as he resolves to make heaven his final and eternal home, and the grounds upon which he was induced to form this resolution. He contemplates the path of sin, and sees that it leads to interminable woe and misery. He looks along the path of the just, and sees that it leads to a life of endless joy and happiness. And while he desires "the lot of the righteous," he reflects, "if I make man my guide, I shall be led astray; for the best men in all ages have had their failings. I can not depend upon my own reason and judgment, for they are not sufficient to guide me in the right way. However earnest I may be in the service of God, and however honest I may be with myself, and with the author of my existence, I am inclined to rely upon my own righteousness and good performances. When I go to men for instruction, there are so many various opinions, there is so much speculation and vain philosophy,

so much uncertainty as to the correctness of their reasonings, that I am still left in the dark. And while he thus reflects upon his condition, and his exposure to eternal ruin, knowing that God was infinite in wisdom and power, and ready to sustain and guide all who would put their trust in him; we hear him exclaim, in the language of the text, "thou shalt guide me by thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory."

Young man, you may have your mind fixed upon the wealth, the honors, and the pleasures of the world. You may be seeking for distinction and position among men. Be this as it may, neglect not the counsel of God. The world with all its wealth, men with all his honor, distinction, and greatness, will soon pass away. And they alone who have walked according to divine direction, can expect to be received into glory, and dwell with God for ever.

THE END.

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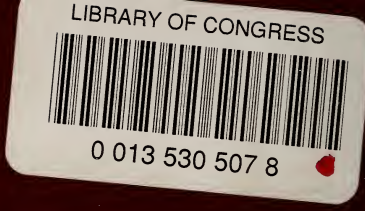
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